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Mr. *Toll's* D E F E N C E
O F
Dr. *Middleton's* Free Inquiry.

W I T H A N
A P P E N D I X,
In A N S W E R to
Every Particular in Dr. *Middleton's* Vindication :

A N D A
P R E F A C E,
O N T H E
C R E D I B I L I T Y O F M I R A C L E S,
Occasioned by the
T W O P R E V I O U S Q U E S T I O N S, *by D.^m Sykes*

By WILLIAM DODWELL, D.D.
Rector of *Shottesbrook, Berks*, and Prebendary of *Sarum*.

L O N D O N :
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IT is of no Importance to the Publick, to be acquainted with the Accidents which prevented my seeing Mr. Toll's Defence for some Time after it was published, the Domestick Cares which engrossed my Attention at that Season, and the other Business which engaged the first Leisure that I could obtain for Application to Study. Upon a cursory Perusal of it, I laid it by, till I might see whether Dr. M. would think it worth while to vindicate Himself, or would be willing to trust his Cause to this Defence; for I did not think that either the Civility or Weight of the Performance required any immediate Notice. But having now recovered a little more Leisure, I have considered it more attentively, and shall here offer my farther Reflections on it to the Publick. If there be any Part of the Question, which may be thought to deserve a more particular Consideration than is offered in this Reply, perhaps it is That, which relates to the general Credibility of Miracles. It is easy to raise Difficulties on such a Point as this, and it may not be so easy to clear them all. The absurd Stories, which have been reported and received, have raised a Prejudice in Many against the Belief of all Miracles; and a Regard to the good Character of Witnesses, without an Examination of the Fact in all its Circumstances, has betrayed others into gross Superstitions and Follies; so that genuine Miracles have often been rejected, and spurious ones admitted; and Infidelity or Credulity have too much divided the World. Some proper Marks of Distinction

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stinction are justly called for, and may, I think, be assigned to the Satisfaction of every reasonable and careful Inquirer. I am the more inclined to look into this Subject, not only on Account of its near Connection with the main Point in Dispute, but because it has been considered by another Writer in such a Manner, as may be thought to prejudice the Evidence offered for the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church. It is indeed the Professed Design of this Author not to concern himself with the Controversy between Dr. M. and his Adversaries, but his Opinion, and the Tendency of his Argument to support it, are easily enough discernible. I am obliged to this Gentleman for his Approbation of the Manner in which I had treated this Argument, which I would not forfeit; and I think his Attempt to shew the Superiority of the Gospel-Miracles, and to guard against Consequences which might reach too far, highly commendable. Neither would I be understood to be writing an Answer to his Sentiments and Reflections, but to shew that his State of the Case, as far as it appears to me to be right, which is in a great Part of it, does not overthrow the Evidence offered on our Side; but that his Concessions, in several Places, are all that are necessary to support the Testimony of the Primitive Fathers in this Particular. He has thrown in, however, occasionally, some Remarks directly calculated to weaken the Force of what had been offered by the Opposers of Dr. M.'s new Scheme, which he will excuse my taking Notice of.

He begins, in his Preface to the previous Questions, with observing, that “ No Two of the Dr's Opposers
 “ agree in the Point, How long after the Apostolick
 “ Age Miracles continued, but that fix upon the Hy-
 “ pothesis of which of these Gentlemen you will, you
 “ are sure to have Four out of Five against the Scheme
 “ you pitch on.” I think the Representation, which He himself has given of their Opinions, may shew the
 contrary;

contrary; and that if you suppose them to continue 'till the Civil Establishment of Christianity, and to cease about that Time, you will have Four of these Five Gentlemen on your Side. The First did not limit their Continuance to the Times of Origen, but added expressly, many more Testimonies might be offered, tho' he had neither Leisure or Inclination, He says, to proceed farther: If He had, it may be presumed that He would have brought them down to the Period assigned; especially as three severe Persecutions, which seemed to need them, interfered in that Interval. "The
 " Second, it is said, carried them to the End of the
 " Third Century." This would be very near the Time of the Civil Establishment of Christianity; but in Reality this Gentleman went farther, to that very Period expressly, calling on Dr. M. to prove that the Miracles of the Fourth Century were all forged (P. 31.) The Opinions of the Third and Fourth, as delivered in their own Words, were, that Miracles continued till the Civil Establishment of Christianity; that
 " probably many wonderful Works were afterwards
 " wrought for some great Ends;" and that " we
 " have Reason to think that they ceased some Time
 " after the Civil Establishment of our Religion." Here is as exact a Concurrence of Opinion as could be between those, who think that the withdrawing of these Gifts might be gradual, and who yet have assigned one common Period as the Conclusion of what might strictly be called the Age of Miracles; and to which Period every one of them professedly confined his Vindication. This was as great an Agreement about the Time of this remarkable Incident, as could be expected; and this Gentleman Himself cannot forbear the Reflection which every one makes on the great Precision and Exactness with which Mr. Whiston has determined this Point, who has assigned the very Year in which He supposes the last Miracle to have been wrought. Had the Dif-

ference of Opinion been great between the Adversaries of Dr. M. on this Article of the Time of their Continuance, it would not at all have affected the main Question, as I have observed in the ensuing Papers: But, in Reality, there is a remarkable Agreement on this Head between Those Writers who are here spoken of.

“ But the First Question previous to this Controversy, which, as this Gentleman rightly observes, ought to be considered, and which seems to be of no small Consequence, is, What are the Grounds upon which the Credibility of Miracles in general is founded? ”

Some Pages are spent to prove what should readily be admitted, that We may and ought to enquire into these Grounds of Credibility, and this Proof is made out from the Reason of the Thing, from the Authority of Scripture, and from the absurd Stories which have been propagated for Want of such free Inquiry. “ It seems,” says This Author, “ to be a fair Question, and not to be answered with a Jest, which St. Austin puts as from some Unbelievers, Why, say They, are not Those Miracles, which You say were done formerly, now done? His Answer was, He that requires Miracles to be done now, in Order to his Belief, is Himself a great Miracle, who does not believe when all the World believes.” Notwithstanding the Turn of Expression, this Answer of St. Austin certainly contains much more than a Jest, and refers to the very Distinction proper to be suggested upon this Enquiry. The World had then been newly converted to the Profession of the Gospel by the Force of Miracles, in Opposition to all their Prepossessions and Lusts, and this Fact of so universal a Conversion, which was not to be accounted for but from the Reality of the Evidence, might well be considered as an Argument of their Truth, might prevent the farther Necessity of such extraordinary Interpositions, and might
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be thought to render Him a surprizing Instance of Incredulity, who could withstand the Force of such a Consideration. I do not perceive that St. Austin gave the least Hint in this Place against the Reasonableness of examining into them, but referred to a very proper Point, the Success of those which had stood the Test of the strictest Examination. By these the most inveterate Prejudices were already overcome, and Christianity so far established as to stand no longer in Need of supernatural Assistance; which was the right Answer, and a very sufficient one, to the Question, which was put to him.

That the Evidence of Miracles proposed to our Assent ought to be examined into, will admit of no Dispute amongst reasonable Men. The Publick Offer of them to Examination at the Time they were wrought, is a Circumstance of the utmost Consequence to establish their Credibility. Many may have been genuine, which had not that Advantage; but those, which were so proposed to Enquiry, which stood that Test, and turned Opposers into Advocates, come recommended to Posterity with the highest Tokens of Genuineness. Reports of Stories, which were reported to the Writers of them, and which never stood the Test of industrious and sagacious Enemies, are not to be parallel'd with those in the forementioned Circumstances; and a Collection of a thousand such Legends from Heathens and Papists, will not lessen the Credibility of such Miracles as are related by many Witnesses in distant Places, who desired their Adversaries to look into them, and who staked every valuable Hope upon their Sincerity. It seemed proper to observe this at first, and once for all, because the Insertion of such Stories seems to be rather for Diversion than Use. They interrupt the View of the Argument, and prove nothing but what will be granted without them, that much Nonsense and Absurdity have been obtruded on the Word under the Pretence of History (P. 12.)

The more Occasion there is to examine into them, and into the general Grounds of the Credibility of Miracles, which are not illustrated by the Repetition of many Legends. The confessed Falshood of many such Reports does not prove that there never was any Truth in any; nay the Truth of some miraculous Interpositions is confessed by All Parties who have engaged in the present Controversy.

The Difficulties which have been raised concerning the Possibility of Miracles, are out of the Question at present. It is acknowledged that They may be wrought, and have been wrought on some important Occasions. The present Question is, What Circumstances may reasonably entitle the Report of them to our Assent?

*This Gentleman begins with observing, that “where-
“ ever Things out of the common Course of Nature
“ are told, they are in themselves liable to Doubt and
“ Suspicion, and are rather incredible than credible
“ at first View” (P. 2.) There seems here to be great
Want of Accuracy both in the Expression, and the Sentiment, for the Author, I presume, meant no more than that they were rather not credible than credible, i. e. rather unlikely than likely at first View. As the Possibility of them is admitted, and several Examples of Things out of the common Course of Nature being performed on important Occasions, are likewise acknowledged, we cannot pass any Judgment, till we have looked into the Circumstances of the Case; nor are they incredible or credible at first View, or more or less the one than the other, till the Nature of the Testimony be taken into Consideration. That they are unusual and infrequent is no Prejudice against the Truth of them, because the Occasion of them may be uncommon too, for any Thing which yet appears; and since this Question is started amongst Those, who acknowledge that the Author of Nature has sometimes reversed the Laws of it, on Exigencies which his infinite Wisdom saw worthy*

thy of such an Interposition, it is highly credible, that He may do this again in a like Situation of Mankind; and therefore there is no more Presumption against a Report of Miracles than for it, merely from this Circumstance of their being out of the common Course of Nature. This first View, being confined to that Consideration, is of no Weight on One Side or the Other amongst Believers, but the Credibility of the Facts reported must depend on the farther View of the State of the Things reported, and of the Reporters of them. As soon as we find any Reason, from the Circumstances of the Case, to think that the Witnesses were deceived Themselves, or had any Intent to deceive Us, then, and not till then, arises a Presumption against the Truth of the Report.

Credibility, it should be observed, relates to the Evidence by which any Report is confirmed to Us; and therefore when a Thing in its own Nature possible is asserted, we cannot, from Any thing in the Nature of it, presuppose its Falshood. When we say a Thing is incredible in itself, we mean, and ought to mean, that it is incapable of being proved by any Testimony: and this can strictly be said of Nothing but an Impossibility. To say, therefore, that a Fact reported is, at first View, rather incredible than credible, is a Form of Speech neither warranted by the common nor the philosophical Use of the Words; for if the Meaning be, that such Facts are rather unlikely than likely at first View, would it not be better to say so in plain Terms? and then the proper Answer will be, that Things, which at first View may appear unusual and improbable, may, upon farther Examination, be confirmed by such Testimony as to be made unquestionable; and This is allowed by this Author in several Instances. The Circumstances of the Fact, we readily allow, are to be taken into Consideration, as well as the Character of the Witnesses, and the Reason is, because by these we may often determine, whether the Reporters

were not deceived in the Case, and guided by a false Judgment in their Report. This may well affect the Force of their Testimony, but still, in this Light, the Credibility of the Facts depends on the external Evidence, and is admitted or rejected according to our Opinion of the Wisdom and Integrity of the Witnesses.

“A High Degree of Improbability,” says this Gentleman, “in all common Cases, except where Miracles are concerned, is allowed to produce the same Effect in denying all Assent, as Impossibility itself; but, in this Particular, mere Improbability of the Thing is not deemed sufficient to destroy all Credit.” (P. 3.) But why not equally in the one Case as in the other? I have not met with this Distinction amongst any Writers on this Subject, nor observed the Fact in the Course of Life. The Improbability which excludes Assent in all common Cases, is not that Improbability which appears at the first View, but that which is founded upon a Review of the whole Case; and if the same continues to appear upon a like thorough Examination of the Report of Miracles, why should it not have the same Effect? Let not the Improbability of Miracles arise merely from their being such, that is, from their being out of the common Course of Nature, but from any natural or moral Incapacity in the Witnesses, and This will be deemed sufficient to destroy their Credit in this Particular, as well as in any other. In all Cases, where it appears more improbable that the Thing should be true, than that the Witnesses should, either thro’ Fraud, or Self-Deceit, concur to impose upon us, there the Report, whether of a natural or supernatural Kind, will of Course be rejected; and this Gentleman has remarked the Fact in the latter Case, even where the Attestation has been attended with all the particular Circumstances of Persons, and Times, and Places,

The Intent, He adds, of such Tales, and his Remarks on them, was to shew, " that the Historian, " who may be credited in ordinary Occurrences, yet is " not to be trusted or believed, without strict Examination, when He relates extraordinary Facts. (P. 12.) But what Protestant expects or desires that extraordinary Facts should be credited without strict Examination? The Primitive Fathers did not, for they offered their Claims to the strictest Scrutiny; nor do the rational Defenders of them at this Time, for They think there is a peculiar and extraordinary Concurrence of Circumstances to confirm those Claims, which cannot be shewn to have attended any Falshood.

On the other Hand this Gentleman censures Bishop Atterbury's Reflection " on the Pretenders to Wonder-working in China or Japan, where there was " no Fear of a Discovery; or sometimes in Spain or " Italy, where there were many always ready to favour such Pretences," and says, that " this Way of " raising a Difficulty or Objection will equally lie against " real Miracles wrought any where at a Distance from " us." I must here beg Leave to dissent from him, and to think that the Bishop's Reflection is a very just one. For when Any pretend to have worked Miracles at a Distance, where we have no other Evidence than their Word, that They made such Pretensions at all; or where, if They did make them, the People may be supposed not qualified to judge of them; or where, if they were qualified, They were prejudiced in their Favour, and interested in the Belief of them, if Those who pretend to have worked Miracles in such Circumstances, refuse to repeat the same, where there is the same or greater Occasion, before Those who are able and willing to examine them, This is a reasonable Cause of Suspicion; but this Reflection is not equally of Force against all real Miracles done at a Distance; the Pretensions to which were made openly, dispersed in Writing

ting at the Time, submitted to the Examination of Enemies, in Times and Places of Literature; and which, in those Circumstances, turned many of their Adversaries into Professors and Patrons of their Cause. The former, which is reflected on by the Bishop, is the Case of the Pretensions of the Papists, which, for the Causes there suggested, may reasonably be rejected: The Latter is the Case of the Claim of the Primitive Fathers, which, being proposed to the Wise and Learned Senate of Rome, as well as to the Governors and People of other Places, and prospering under the most publick Proposals of Enquiry, may on that Account be reasonably admitted.

This Distinction may be of Use, if applied to all the Instances reported by this Gentleman. He Himself, after having given up the Accounts of Miracles given by the Jesuits, near Two Hundred Years ago, as fabulous, proceeds to look backward Twelve or Thirteen Hundred Years, or a Century higher still, and to enquire into “ the positive Evidence of Miracles done in those
“ Times, Miracles, says He, wrought before good Men,
“ able to judge, and honestly disposed to tell the whole
“ Truth.” (Pag. 20.) Such a Character of the Witnesses, different, by his own Confession, from that of the Jesuits, is a Presumptive Circumstance in Favour of their Reports, and will render them rather credible than incredible at the first View. “ But, says He,
“ whether the Grounds of Credibility alter with Ages,
“ is the Point in Debate.” I should apprehend that That could never be Matter of Debate betwixt sensible Writers. What is credible at one Time must, if all the Circumstances be the same, be credible at all Times: But Circumstances of Fact may vary, and may make particular Reports more or less credible in different Ages, tho’ the general Grounds of Credibility continue always the same. That there was a very material Difference of Circumstances in the Ages before the Establishment
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of Christianity, and all After-Ages, and more especially these latter ones, has been particularly shewn in the ensuing Sheets, and need not here be repeated. Dr. M. Himself has observed of the Fourth Century, that “that Age, in which Christianity was established by the Civil Power, had no real Occasion for any Miracles.” *Introd. Disc. (P. 36.)* This Remark affords a presumptive Argument against all After-Reports, and in Favour of the preceding ones; and may shew, that tho’ Credibility does not depend merely on the Distance of Ages, yet it may depend much on the Circumstances of Times, and that what may be very credible in one Situation, may be very much otherwise in a different one. However, we shall very readily admit the next Reflection offered by this Author in the Way of Reasoning, that “if some Facts are related which bear about them evident Marks of Improbability, one cannot but suspect, or suspend one’s Judgment, notwithstanding the Confidence with which they are told, unless there be some Circumstances more than common Testimony, which may lead one to give Credit to the Relation.” *(P. 26.)* We think that such Circumstances did attend, and have been shewn to attend, the concurrent Report of the Primitive Fathers in the Case in View.

We are next entertained with an Account, which particularly concerns the Adversaries of Dr. M. as they have All laid some Stress upon it. It is here represented as a Miracle as well attested as Any, and yet as certainly groundless, and contradictory in the very Report of it: And it seems introduced to shew, that the strongest Testimony cannot confirm so improbable a Story, and that all After-Relations are the more to be suspected for the Mistake which is some way supposed to have happened in this so early and solemn an Attestation. It relates to the Prophecy of St. Polycarp, and the Completion

pletion of it, concerning his being burnt, which this Gentleman says happened otherwise than had been foretold, “as if it had happened on Purpose to shame all such as pretended to the Heavenly Gift of Prophecy, without having it.” (P. 29.) — “In Fact,” He says, “He was not burnt alive, but when He was Dead; directly contrary to his Prophecy.” (P. 30.) This was an Objection which had escaped Dr. M. and his Defender, yet is here brought as an obvious Proof of the Falshood of the Report, or of his Pretension to a Prophetick Spirit. Should I ask, What Connection this Story, according to this Gentleman’s own Representation of it, has with the State of the Case concerning the Credibility of Miracles in general, or how consistent this Account is with the professed Design of not entering into the Controversy between Dr. M. and his Adversaries, I might be thought rather to bring a Difficulty on this Gentleman, than to clear that which is proposed by Him. Let Us therefore consider the Charge of Contradiction, which is here brought against this Relation. Polycarp seeing in a Vision his Pillow, or what was under his Head, all on Fire, said prophetically to those about him, I must be burnt alive. The Event was, that he was soon after seized, and condemned to the Flames, which could not but strongly affect those, who knew He had thus foretold the Manner of his Death, when other Methods of Execution were more probable, even in Case of a Persecution. How then was this Prophecy, in Fact, contradicted? Was this Sentence reversed, and was He not put to the Fiery Trial? No. This is not pretended. He was put on the Pile, the History tells us, and the Fire kindled around Him. Did He then escape from it in any Method, and return alive and sound to his Friends? Neither is This pretended. He lost his Life in the enduring of it, and, according to his Prayer at that very Season, was that very Day accepted by God as a well-pleasing Sacrifice,

fice, as He had fore-ordained it, and manifested it before-hand, and now fulfilled it. *How then did his Prediction fail of Accomplishment? Why the Fire, it is observed, was not the immediate Cause of his Death, but the Executioner's Sword. And is it not usually so amongst others that are sentenced to this Kind of Death, that the mortal Wound is received in some other Method? Does this Gentleman think that the Law is not executed, or that we cannot, with Propriety of Speech, say that such an One is burnt alive, because a Coup de Grace is generally given, or that they are, through Favour, strangled at the Stake before the Torture of the Flames can much affect them? Could it be foretold of any Persons amongst us, that come to this unhappy End, that they should be burnt alive, would Any other Person in the Kingdom except against the Completion of it, because the Executioner was permitted or bribed to give a favourable Blow, which might make the Sufferer insensible of the acuter Pains of the Fire? Common Sense, and the customary Use of such Phrases, afford a sufficient Answer to this Objection, and if the Legal Sense, and popular Acceptation of the Meaning of such a Sentence as that of being burnt alive, be fully answered, as it was in this Case, I think we need not much disturb ourselves about Critical Observations on the Words, or such Objections as arise from them. Polycarp was committed alive to the Flames, He returned not alive from them; but was, in the End, burnt to Ashes; and thus the Sentence of his Persecutors, and his own Predictions were accomplished.*

But after all, the very Letter of this Prophecy, according to this Gentleman's Account of it, was likewise fulfilled, and Polycarp was really burnt alive, notwithstanding his Death was immediately wrought by the Stroke of the Executioner. For He seems to think that the Martyr really felt the Pains of the Fire, and, if He did, was not this literally a Completion of his
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Prediction? “If,” says this Writer, “the Comparisons used in the Relation of his Martyrdom, convey any Idea to us, the Place where the Martyr was, was very hot, and would naturally have “put an End to “his Life; and had it done so, his Prophecy had been “fulfilled.” (Pag. 28.) And so it was equally as the Case happened, especially as it is here represented: For those were not his very Words, that the Flames should put an End to his Life, and it is not fair to vary the Expression, when the Question is, Whether the Prophecy was literally compleated. The Martyr foretold, that He should be burnt alive, and this Gentleman thinks, that, by the Account given, He actually did burn, before the Executioner was ordered to stab Him; and if so, was not the very Letter of the Prophecy fulfilled? If this Gentleman insists farther, that the Word κατακαυθῆναι means, to be consumed by Fire, then a farther Difficulty may be raised against Him, on his own Critical Method of adhering to the Letter; how Any one can be said to be consumed by Fire whilst He is Living. If He says, that This is to be understood according to the customary Use of that Expression, I shall agree with Him, but then I say, that such Use of it is applicable to the Case of St. Polycarp’s Martyrdom, as related by the Church of Smyrna, and that He was burnt alive in the same Sense that Criminals usually are, who suffer under a legal Sentence; whereas, in Strictness of Speech, if by being burnt we mean being consumed by Fire, then All, who so are consumed, are not burnt alive, but when They are Dead. Their Death, tho’ occasioned by the Flames, must happen before They are reduced to Ashes; and thus We may go on criticising upon Words, till We may find a Contradiction in Terms in the Prophecy itself, Δὲ με ζῶντα κατακαυθῆναι, whereas Every One plainly sees the Meaning of it, and equally sees the Completion of it in the Fate of the Martyr.

And

And if the Centurion did immediately light the Fire again, to consume the Body, (as it is most probable that He did) then a mortal Wound given by stabbing, could not so instantly extinguish all Degrees and Symptoms of Life, as that He might not with great Propriety be said to be burnt alive, at least with as much Propriety as Other Sufferers by the same Kind of Death.

*In Answer to some Interrogatories not unsuitable to the Occasion, This Gentleman goes on to observe that “ The Power of God is not the Point in Question, but “ the Veracity of Witnesses, and if,” says He, “ the “ Circumstances of their Narrations, are such as make “ the Thing incredible in itself, Every One has a “ Right to doubt of, or to reject such a Story.” (P. 31, 32.) This is true, but I do not see how it affects or weakens the Testimony of the Witnesses in the Case before Us, or how it helps to clear up the main Point of the Credibility of Miracles in general. The true Point, which seems to want a clear State of it, is, What are Those Circumstances, which render a Narrative incredible in itself? No such however appear in the Report of St. Polycarp’s Martyrdom. Nay, That was attended with such as may enable us “ to argue “ the Probability of a miraculous Interposition” in the Case. “ That God could preserve the Body of Polycarp from the Flames, is no Doubt possible;” says this Gentleman; (P. 30.) and Dr. M. allows, that the Intent of Miraculous Powers, when they were granted, was to enable the first Preachers of the Gospel more easily to over-rule the inveterate Prejudices both of Jews and Gentiles, and to bear up against the discouraging Shocks of popular Rage and Persecution. Could there then be a more important Occasion for the answering these Ends than the Martyrdom of so eminent and early a Teacher in the Christian Church? Could a Miracle have been wrought at any Season, which was more likely to have a good Effect both on the Friends
and*

and Enemies of the Cause of Christ? We find by the Report of the former, that It had its proper Influence on them; and it was extremely well calculated at least to work on Those of the Latter, who were open to any Degree of Conviction.

But We are now going to leave particular Accounts, and to come to the general Grounds of Credibility. "What is usually said, says He, in the Behalf of the "Miracles done in the Ages of the best Authority since "the Apostolick Times, is, that They are related by "Men of Piety, of Abilities, and Integrity. Let This "have all the Weight it deserves." (P. 35.) This is as ample a Concession as is desired, will obviate the Objections brought against them by Dr. M. and will confirm their Testimony, if the Facts attested are not absolutely incredible in Themselves, and such as no Piety, and Abilities, and Integrity can establish. What are the Circumstances, which yield such an absolute Incredibility, We are next to consider.

"When a Fact, says this Author, is such as We "never saw, nor is it possible for any Man by his ordinary Powers to do, the common Way of Reasoning "is, first to try it by Experience." I confess I could not readily comprehend the Meaning of this, nor the Method of trying by Experience a Fact which we never saw, and which it is not possible for any Man by his ordinary Powers to do: But from what follows afterwards I collect the Meaning of it to be, that We must consult the Experience of Others of former Times, as well as of the present, the Accounts of History, and the Experience of Mankind in all Ages. In this Sense This Method may be very proper, and will not turn out to the Disadvantage of the Argument before Us. But I am not certain that This is the Sense intended, because when this Gentleman speaks of trying such a Fact by Experience, He adds, "if We find no Agreement to "that, then it is the common Way to see for a Reason,

“son, or to make a Judgment upon Circumstances, from whence the Probability of such a Miracle may appear.” I do not object to the Reasonableness of this Method; but the prescribing it in Case of the Facts not answering to the Trial of Experience, raises some Obscurity. A Fact, which upon the very Supposition We never saw ourselves, and which is beyond the ordinary Powers of Nature, cannot answer to our own Experience; and if it answer not to the Experience of any former Times, I know not what farther Circumstances can make such a Miracle probable. But if the History of former Times assures Us, that Miracles have been wrought upon important Occasions, it is then highly probable that they may be wrought again upon the like Exigencies; and this is a good Reason why We should examine farther, whether there was any such like probable Cause for a miraculous Interposition. Whether the Miracles reported are of the same specifick Kind, with former ones, is not material; for considered as Miracles, as Events beyond the ordinary Powers of any Man, They may be said to answer to Experience, if there are in History such well attested Accounts of Miracles as are allowed to deserve Credit.

The general Rules, by which We determine the Probability of Facts, are next proposed to our Consideration; and the First that is laid down is this, that “If We perceive a Thing impossible in its own Nature, no Testimony, no Authority whatsoever is sufficient to make it be believed to be really done.” (P. 35.) This Rule is a most unquestionable one, but should not some Caution be added under it concerning the Danger of our mistaking in forming too hastily such a Judgment? How many real Truths have been rejected, without Examination, under the general Notion of their Impossibility, when the Error has lain only in the prejudiced Opinion of Those to whom such

Truths have been proposed? Great Care should therefore be taken to clear this Point of the real Impossibility of the Thing reported, before it be set aside on the Strength of this Rule: and I cannot think that the Instance given under this Head does at all contribute to illustrate the Subject. “ When the People of Egnatia, it is “ said, pretended that They could at their Temple burn “ and consume Incense without Fire, it was easy to “ perceive a Trick.” It might be so, but not, as far as I can see, for the Reason assigned under this Head. As the Occasion might be insignificant, and the Case was not submitted to Examination, sufficient Cause of Suspicion appears; but how does it appear that the Thing was impossible in itself? Could We suppose that the Cause was worthy of a Divine Interposition, and that unanswerable Evidence of such an Interposition was offered, would it be beyond the Reach of Divine Power to consume the Incense without Fire? Others will say, that it is impossible that Fuel, that a Bush for Instance, should not consume, when a Fire flames within it; or that Human Bodies should not burn when cast into a fiery Furnace; but We Believers know better; and that when the Author of Nature has great Ends to serve by reversing those Laws which Himself appointed and fixed, He can give such Direction to the Elementary Parts of Nature as to work Effects very different from their stated Influence, that in such Cases He can so order it, that the Fire may have Power in the Water, forgetting his own Virtue, and that the Water may forget his own quenching Nature; or that on the other Hand the Flames may not waste the Flesh of the corruptible living Things, tho’ They walked therein, neither melt the Icy Kind of Heavenly Meat that was of Nature apt to melt. It must be as easy to the Author of Nature to reverse his own Laws as to continue them, and therefore the Charge
of

of Impossibility will not hold merely from this Consideration, that the Effect reported is different from or contrary to the natural Power and Influence of the Elements. Let the Thing reported be clearly shewn to be impossible, and it will readily be allowed, that This will preclude the Necessity of examining the Witnesses.

*The second Rule laid down is this, that “ If a
“ Thing be possible, and yet We find by Experience,
“ that it never, or seldom happens; or that We Our-
“ selves, or Others, have never, or scarce ever heard,
“ or found it to happen, We give our Assent to Wit-
“ nesses, who attest such a Thing, with great Diffi-
“ culty.” (P. 36.) We are, with Reason, more
careful in the Examination of such Witnesses, but yet if
their Testimony can stand the Test, it may be admitted;
and Unusual Things have in several Instances been well
attested and generally credited, notwithstanding this Cir-
cumstance of their happening but seldom. As Tully
observes, “ If This Circumstance of Infrequency be
“ thought to constitute a Prodigy, then A Wise Man
“ is such a Prodigy:” and yet there have been Those,
who have been universally esteemed such, notwithstanding
the Rareness of the Character. The Instances gi-
ven under this Head are not of such Things as have
seldom happened, but have never happened; and
therefore are no way parallel to the Case of Mira-
cles, which this Author acknowledges to have been some-
times wrought.*

*The Third Rule is, “ If a Fact be extraordinary,
“ and what does not come within the Verge of our
“ Experience, or that of Others, who are contempo-
“ rary with Us; yet if We are able to see a good
“ Reason, why such a Fact should be done, We may
“ give good Credit to it, or if an extraordinary
“ Fact has been done, of the Truth of which we are
“ convinced; We may judge a like Fact, to be pro-
bable,*

bable, if a like Reason appears." (P. 37.) *This Rule is both true and important, and will be found to be of great Use in the Application of it to the Miracles of the Primitive Church. The only Caution, which I should have chosen to have added under this Head, is the express Concession of the next Proposition.*

" It does not hence follow, that God never does
 " interpose in a Manner extraordinary, where We
 " perhaps cannot see the Reason of his Interposi-
 " tion." This is that great Point, which those who
 argue on the Subject of Miracles, seem often to want
 to be reminded of; who place themselves in the Seat
 of God, and judge as peremptorily of the Occasion
 or the Want of it, as if They saw thro' the Whole
 of the Design with his unerring Judgment. It is added,
 " But the Probability of his not interposing in such
 " a Manner is such, that the Credit of Witnesses
 " must be able to counterbalance the Improbability of
 " such his Interposition, before We can assent to it."
 (P. 38.) If the former Part of this Sentence be
 spoken of the present Times, I see not but that it may
 be admitted. The Probability that God will not in-
 terpose miraculously in our Days is so great, that
 the Credit of Witnesses must be great indeed to coun-
 terbalance it. We have Reason to believe that such
 miraculous Interpositions have long been disconti-
 nued; We have no Promise to cause Us to expect a Re-
 newal of them, and We see no particular Exigencies
 which can require them. But this Argument concern-
 ing the Improbability of extraordinary Interpositions
 cannot stand as a general Prejudice and Presumption
 against all such, because it depends upon Times and
 Circumstances; and the whole Force of it lay on the
 other Side in those Primitive Times, which We have
 now a View to. They had seen them in the Age imme-
 diately preceding; They had a Promise, not limited,
 for

for the Continuance of them, and They saw the Occasion for them very fully continuing in their own Times. The Probability therefore of God's continuing to interpose in an extraordinary Manner in that Age, is such, that the Common Credit of Witnesses might well be thought sufficient to establish it. The Use of this Observation, that God may see Reasons for interposing when We do not, is chiefly applicable to particular Facts, for We see a general Reason for it, in those Ages at least: and it is chiefly serviceable in obviating Prejudices from first Appearances, and in preparing Us to look carefully into the whole Circumstances of the Affair; for the Reasons do often open to Us upon the Enquiry, which lay hid upon a transient View of the Case. It may farther be observed, that the Intent of Miracles bestowed might be either for the sole and immediate Use of those Persons and Times to whom They were granted; or, in Conjunction with this End, it might be for the farther Instruction and Admonition of future Ages, as an Evidence of some Truths in Favour and Support of which those Miracles were wrought. In the former Case, if they are mentioned at all in History, it is more than is necessary with Respect to Posterity; and if they are not mentioned with all the Circumstances, which might have supported their Truth, they may notwithstanding be not the less genuine: and it is no insuperable Objection, if they are well attested, to say that We do not see the Reason of them. But where They were intended as Objects of Faith to After-Times, there the Reasons of them are discernible as well as the external Evidence of them incontestable; and None of them are pressed upon the Belief of Posterity, but where the Importance of the Occasion was visibly worthy of such an extraordinary Interposition. If the Establishment of the Truth of a Divine Revelation be not an End deserving of the Use of such Means, I know not what higher can be

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assigned;

assigned; and This is the End assigned for their Continuance by Those, who vindicate the Miracles of the Primitive Church.

From the Credibility of Things We are very pertinently led to consider that of the Persons: and This is summed up in very few and very proper Words. "A Witness of any Fact must have Opportunity of examining it: He must be faithful in relating it: He must not be biassed by Interest or Party: He must not be credulous: He must have Abilities to search out the Truth." (P. 38.) These are so truly the just and necessary Qualifications of Witnesses, that where they concur, We cannot reasonably refuse our Assent; where Any of them are wanting, there will proportionably arise some Ground for suspecting their Testimony. But They All concurred in the Case of the Primitive Apologists for Christianity, as I have shewn in Answer to Mr. Toll's Comparison of their Testimony with that of the present Advocates for the Continuance of Miracles in the Romish Church.

It is rightly added, "If a Man be an Eye-Witness of any Fact, and has the Qualities just now mentioned, He deserves the first Degree of Credit. If a Person relates what an Eye-Witness tells Him, He has a lesser Degree of Credit due to Him. He still has a lower Degree, who relates only what They say, to whom Eye-Witnesses have made a Report. And as for Those, who collect from Others what They have said, and thus compile a History of Facts, their Credit depends upon their Judgment in rejecting or relating, what has appeared to them to be true or false." (P. 38.) These Rules appear to me to be so reasonable and just, that the Application of them will clear up many Difficulties, and answer many Questions proposed by this Author in the farther Pursuit of his Argument; particularly such as relate to the Criteria, by which We may distinguish which of the Miracles re-
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lated, are, and which are not to be credited. I will only observe at present, that according to this Account the Testimony of Those Apologists, who wrote before the Establishment of Christianity, deserves the first Degree of Credit; for They speak of Things of which Themselves were Eye-Witnesses. The Manner in which They propose the Subject of Miracles to the Enquiry of their Adversaries implies it; Their own Conversion by that Means demonstrates it; and their Declarations often clearly avow it. Origen, One of the latest Apologists in that Interval, asserts it expressly in so many Words, insists on the Conviction which had been extorted from Enemies by Means of such Miracles, and says expressly, Several of this Kind We ourselves have seen. Orig. cont. Celsus. Lib. I. P. 362. Ben. Ed.

Again, “ Another Rule is assigned of great Importance to form our Notions of Credibility; and that is, if Enemies as well as Friends concur in relating the same Fact.” (P. 39.) I may add, that if They do not deny the Fact, but attempt to evade it, This is likewise a Circumstance of great Weight to establish the Belief of it. It was not to be expected that They should officiously and unnecessarily relate the same Facts; but if, when pressed with them, They did not deny them, This must be a strong Confirmation of them; and so this Gentleman Himself acknowledges. Now This Advantage likewise holds with Respect to the Miracles of the Primitive Church as well as Those of the Apostolical Age. It appears by those Apologists, who set Themselves to answer all Objections, that this of denying the Facts was not one; and it appears by some Testimonies of those Adversaries themselves, that the Reality of them was admitted by the very Evasions used to weaken the Force of the Argument arising from them.

The following Pages carry Us back again where We first set out, and seem calculated to shew that no Testimony can be sufficient to make a Report of the Interruption or Reverfal of the Laws of Nature credible. I was in Hopes We had now gained these Preliminary Points,—that Miracles were possible in themselves ;—that they have been wrought on important Occasions ;—that it is credible that They may be wrought in other Instances on Occasions of equal Moment ;—that there may be Reasons for them in the Counsels of Providence where We may not discern at least all those Reasons ; but that where We do discern them, there their Credibility is the better established ;—that where the Witnesses are faithful, disinterested, cautious, wise, and have Opportunities of Enquiry, and even of Ocular Demonstration, there the highest Credit is due to their Character ; and lastly, that where Enemies are driven to inconsistent Evasions, there all reasonable Occasions of Doubt are cut off.—But after all these rational Grounds for forming a right Judgment on the Report of miraculous Events, a Supposition is again made of
“ a Fact related, improbable in itself, because We
“ have never found in our own Experience, or in
“ that of Others, any similar Instance ; nor have ever
“ heard or seen any Man able to do, what is said to be
“ done :—A Suspicion, it is said, presently arises,
“ and lies against the Man who relates it, however
“ faithful the Relator may be, and even credible in
“ all other Instances. Nor will his Ability, or sup-
“ posed Honesty, or his being even an Eye-Witness,
“ totally remove the Jealousy of Fraud, or Imposition
“ or Trick ;” and then the Reason follows, “ Because
“ the Improbability of the Thing outweighs any As-
“ surance that We can have of Personal Qualities.”
(P. 39, 40.) If so, were not those Observations on the Qualifications of Witnesses unnecessary and superfluous, since, according to this Account, no Testimony can
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be sufficient to prove a Miracle? For it is to be observed, that the Improbability of the Fact related is not here charged on the Triflingness of the Occasion, or on the Want of Examination into it, or on any appendant Circumstances which might seem unlikely, but merely on its not answering to our own or others Experience in any similar Instance, or to what we have heard or seen Any Man able to do, that is, merely to its being miraculous: And This Improbability is said to outweigh any Assurance that We can have of Personal Qualities. We are then led again to the Mention of Miracles upon Tradition by Heathen Historians; where the Testimony of Eye-Witnesses is not pretended; where no End or Use of them was assigned; where no Examination of them was offered or admitted; all which may securely be rejected without so dangerous a Proposition as this, that “ the Improbability of a “ Miracle outweighs any Assurance that We can have “ of the Personal Qualities of the Witnesses.” Whereas so great an Improbability as this must depend not on the Nature of a Miracle as such, but on the Circumstances attending it, which therefore ought to be specified. It is improbable that a Miracle should be worked for no End, or for a trifling one; but it is not improbable that it should be worked on a weighty Occasion, nor is it improbable that We may upon Enquiry discern such Occasion for it; and therefore its not answering hitherto to our own or others Experience, or to what We have seen or heard, is no insuperable Objection against it; but if it be offered to our Enquiry, if it be found to answer some great End, if the Witnesses were Many, and Honest and Prudent; and had all the other Qualifications before spoken of, such a Fact, thus attested, tho’ it be miraculous, may well deserve and expect Credit.

And indeed, notwithstanding the Want of Caution and Limitation in the general Proposition here referred to,

to, this Gentleman himself thought fit, in repeating the Substance of it, and laying down this as the Rule of distinguishing Truth from Falshood, to "consider the Nature of the Thing told, to admit what is agreeable "to Experience, and to reject what is contrary to "it," thought fit to add on the latter Case, "unless "there has been such Examination, as precludes all "Doubt." (P. 42.) Without Doubt This is a very necessary Article; and This, which is thrown in in an incidental Clause, was deserving of the first and principal Consideration. Should not the Rule therefore have been, "Consider the Nature and the Circumstances of the Thing told;" for if the Nature of it only as a Miracle, and as such, not answering to Experience, be sufficient to destroy its Credit, to what Purpose can be any After-Examination? Or how can it possibly prove such as to preclude all Doubt concerning the Reality of the Fact reported? I should chuse therefore on such an Occasion to say, Consider not only the Nature of the Thing told, but Consider the Circumstances of it, and of Him or of those who relate it. Consider whether the Miracle reported was wrought on any such Occasion as those were, which we believe Providence has heretofore wrought; Consider what Opportunities the Relators had to judge of them; whether They were witnesses to them Themselves; whether They were done in their Times; whether They were then recorded when all might know the Truth or Falshood of them. Consider the Manner in which They are said to have been wrought; whether They were done in private; whether They were offered to Examination, especially to Those who were most concerned to disprove them. Consider the Connection of them, whether the Miracles reported by different Persons have any Relation to Each Other; whether They were wrought in the same Cause; whether there was any professed End for which they were wrought; whether

whether that End was, according to the Rule of Analogy, suitable to the other Dispensations of Providence, and worthy of such an Interposition. Consider the Effect, whether the Cause prospered in Favour of which They were wrought; whether the Witnesses were always Favourers of that Cause; whether They were brought over to it by unavoidable Conviction wrought by the same Means; whether They openly proposed the same Means of Conviction to Others. Consider lastly the View of Those who make the Report, whether They have any temporal Interest to serve by propagating the Belief of them; whether They have any Principles which might excuse their Promoting a Falshood for the Service of some supposed good End; or whether it appears that their Conscience and their Security would both have obliged them to have told the Truth, and detected the Pretence if it had been groundless. If, upon a View of all these Circumstances, there arises greater Cause of Suspicion than Ground of Confirmation, the Report will be rejected; but the Reason will be, not from considering merely the Nature of the Thing told, its not answering to our Experience, or its being contrary to the stated Course of Nature, but from its Failure in some other Particular necessary to support its Credibility.

*This Gentleman goes on to take Notice of what is usually observed in Favour of Miracles, “ that an
“ Interposition of Providence is supposed in such Cases,
“ and thereby a Power is acknowledged sufficient to
“ bring about whatever is possible;” (P. 43) and his Remarks on this are of Force against such, if such there are, as contend that the Report of a Miracle should be admitted, because it may be true. But amongst the most sanguine Advocates for this Cause, I have not met with Any so bold and so weak as to rest the Point on that Issue, and to urge the Truth of any Miracle merely from the Possibility of it.*
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The observation referred to is intended as an Answer to the Objection of Those, who insist on the Incredibility of Miracles as such, and so far it is of Force, that the Interposition of Providence being supposed in such Cases, there is Power sufficient to accomplish the End, if in other Respects it be Credible. No One carries the Force of it farther, or pleads for the Belief of Miracles, merely because God may Work them; but every reasonable Believer will join with this Gentleman in desiring a Critical Enquiry into the Truth of them. They may not perhaps so readily join with Him in another Part of the same Sentence, that “ if
 “ We do not ever see a miraculous Interposition,—We
 “ argue from the Improbability of the Thing as
 “ much out-weighing the Credit of the Author;” (P. 44) because This must depend on a critical Enquiry into the Credit of the Author; if That will stand the Test, and other Circumstances appear worthy of such an Interposition, the Improbability arising merely from our never having seen a Miracle, will not outweigh the well-supported Testimony of a Competent Witness. I cannot help observing in this Place, that this Gentleman hitherto generally Speaks of one only Witness as attesting such miraculous Events, but but tho’ a Miracle so attested may be true, yet None that were intended for the Belief of Posterity, were ever, I believe, left to rest on a single Testimony.

It has been suggested, says this Gentleman, “ that
 “ it is not necessary to believe every particular mira-
 “ culous Story which occurs either among the Ancients
 “ or Moderns.” (P. 45.) This seems to me a very reasonable Suggestion, and it was offered by me as well as by Others. “ But then, says he, if Miracles are
 “ uniformly related, as done in different Ages, and
 “ different Places; and This for a long Continuance;
 “ and Historians, and other good Men, concur in
 “ the Report of such Facts; what Credit is due to
 “ such

“ *such a Concurrence of Attestations?*” Some farther Questions should, I think, be asked, before a decisive Answer be given to this. Such a Concurrence is certainly a Presumption in their Favour; and if the Facts attested were such as fell within their own Knowledge, if they had particular Opportunities of looking into them, and particular Motives to induce them to tell the Truth, if the Claims to such Powers, and the Evidence of such Facts, were made publick at the Time, and offered freely to All Enquirers, then, I think, the highest Degree of Credit will be due to such concurring Attestations, and they cannot be evaded but by such Exceptions as would hold equally against the Belief of all miraculous Interpositions. But if the farther Particulars now enquired prove unfavourable and suspicious, if the Miracles reported were done only among themselves, and calculated only to answer some private Ends, if they afforded some Temptations to them to prevaricate, and at the same Time some Motives to excuse the Crime and quiet their Consciences in such Prevarication, and principally if they were not offered to the free Examination of those, for whose Conviction They were pretended to be wrought; in the Report of Miracles thus circumstanced, the mere Concurrence of many Witnesses in different Times and Places will not be sufficient to support their Credit.

But then, “ *Must we not look on such Witnesses as Fools or Knaves, All to concur without Con-
tradiction, and acting as in Concert to propagate
what is false.*” (P. 46.) This likewise I had urged as an absurd Consequence of rejecting the concurring Testimony of the Primitive Fathers, in their Report of Miracles; and the Charge will hold with Respect to Others, just so far as their Circumstances are parallel to theirs, and no farther.

But

But this Gentleman attempts to set aside the Force of both the forementioned Suggestions in the following Manner. "Let it be observed, says he, First, when it is
 "thought right to give up particular miraculous Stories,
 "some Test or other must be given, by which One
 "may judge, which are the defensible ones, and which
 "the indefensible." (P. 46) Such has, I think, been given, by which We may form a reasonable tho' not an infallible Judgment, and such as, I believe, most reasonable Believers do usually judge by. But this Author goes on,
 "Are the Popish Miracles of any Century, since the Sixth
 "or Seventh, to have Credit?" I think not, for the Reasons here already intimated, and assigned more at large in the ensuing Reply. Well then, says he,
 "If the Answer be in the Negative, I shall Ask,
 "Are St. Martin's? Are Symeon Stylites's? Are
 "Hilarion's? Are St. Anthony's?" Suppose now, We should not be disposed with Mr. Toll, to reject all these together in a Bundle, but should say that of these some are more, some less probable; and that if Those Miracles, which are said to be wrought in Publick and upon Occasions which appear worthy of them, were known to be true, This may easily account for the Reception of other Stories which were told of them, and which never underwent any Examination; Where would be the Absurdity of such a Supposition, or what Advantage could it give to Popery or any other Superstition? But granting that all the Miracles of these reputed Saints are to be given up as forged and groundless, What would be the Consequence? If these are "not to be credited," says this Gentleman, "tho'
 "Historians concur without Contradiction in them,
 "What is the Rule by which We can judge, which
 "are to be credited, or which not?" I answer in the first Place, that this Case, which is stated as if it was parallel with the Attestation of those early Miracles, which were wrought before the Civil Establishment of Christianity,

*Christianity, is very different from it. The Use intended from this Parallel is easy enough to be distinguished, and will be sufficiently obviated by observing, that these Reports stand upon very different Foundations. That Miracles continued in the Primitive Church, We have the concurring Testimony of All, who had any Occasion to mention the Evidence of Christianity, or to write in Defence of it; and incidentally, of Some who were only enforcing the Practice of it: nay even of Some who were Enemies to it. But of the Miracles of the Saints now spoken of, We have the Testimony only of some particular Persons, of the Writers of their Lives; and as this Writer observes in a particular Instance, “ there plainly runs
“ thro’ all those Discourses such an Affection for their
“ particular Saint, and for all his Sayings, as well
“ as for all his Actions, as shews them to have had
“ the highest Esteem for his Person. And They relate every Thing in such a Manner as manifests almost an implicit Faith in Him, and in whatever
“ He said.” (P. 22.) This Remark is applicable to the greater Part of these Writers of Lives; and This may, without a Miracle, account for the Exaggerations and Additions, which Those may, without Inconsistency, acknowledge, who suppose there was some Truth in the Foundation. But since these Lives depend often on single Testimonies, and at the best on the Reports of particular Friends, in what Sense can it be said, that “ Historians concur in them without Contradiction, as if this Case was parallel to the Report of miraculous Powers in the earliest Ages? No Historians mention these latter but their own Biographers; There is no Concurrence of Testimony as in the former Case, Neither would Dr. M. Himself allow, that there was no Contradiction to these in History; for he urges the express Mention of the Ceasing of Miracles and the Reasons assigned for it, as a sure
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Argument against the Continuance of Any at that Time: And it is certainly a good Argument against the Belief of their being so frequent as these Writers of Lives report. But it is to be remembered as a very considerable Distinction, that before the Civil Establishment of Christianity, when the Apologists were so frequent in their Pretensions to Miraculous Gifts, there was no One Writer amongst them, who disclaimed them; not a single Christian, who mentions the Ceasing of Miracles, or who pretends to assert that Fact, or to assign the Reason of it.

This Gentleman goes on, " If it be Age alone that gives the Sanction, Care must be taken lest Any One taking a little and a little from it, should artfully take away the Authority of the Whole." I would ask again, against Whom this Remark is intended. Where are the Advocates for the Belief of the Miracles in the Primitive Church, who have pleaded as if " it were Age alone that gives the Sanction," against Whom this artful Method might be employed? Was the Stress ever laid merely upon the Antiquity of them? Have not the Reasons always been assigned, why Miracles were more credible in the earliest Ages, particularly in those preceding the Conversion of the Governors of the World? Was there not very evidently more Occasion for Miracles at that Time? Were They not then more openly offered to Examination? And were not the Witnesses in that Age more disinterested and unexceptionable? If These Circumstances, often specified, could be disproved, it might be Somewhat to the Purpose; but I know not why We are amused with Answers to Arguments which never were offered; or why a Gentleman so capable of writing pertinently to the Question, should go from it to combat imaginary Notions.

He adds, " Secondly, Admitting it to be true, that Men concur in Attestations of Miraculous Facts; yet it is hard to represent them all as Fools or Knaves,
even

“ even supposing the Facts to be false.” I answer again, This depends entirely on the Circumstances of the Case. If the Facts were such as happened frequently, and All had publick Opportunities of examining ; if they were such, as in various Instances fell under their own Senses, which common Sense could not fail to judge of ; if they were such as that their present and future Welfare much depended on their Judgment of the Reality of them ; if in such repeated, obvious, important Facts, there was so much Unanimity from many Witnesses, in different Times and Places, and yet the Facts are supposed to be groundless, I see not how the Witnesses can be acquitted both of Folly and Knavery in such their concurring Testimony of a Falshood. The Circumstances here suggested in their Vindication, of their “ attesting upon Report,” their “ taking for granted what They did not examine” or their “ acting upon Prejudices, and imagining a Continuance of real Powers, in Opposition to the supposed Powers of Magic, or any such Illusion,” (P. 47.) These can have no Room in the Case now stated, where They might have been Eye-Witnesses, and assert that they were, where there was no Room for such blinding Prejudices, and wild Imaginations ; where a just Examination could not but open the Truth ; where Folly must be the Charge, if They all uniformly neglected such Examination as must afford them a right Information, and Knavery, if They continued to attest a Falshood, which an Enquiry must have shewn to be such.

The Mention of the Popish Miracles is here again introduced. It is said that in this Case, “ the Concurrence of Attestations continues to this Day ; and whatever fully accounts for this Concurrence now, may possibly help Us to account for the like Concurrence in Times past.” (P. 47.) I think I have shewn the contrary ; that the same Considerations cannot possibly account for both Cases ; but that the Reasons,
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which

which induce the Papists to carry on this Fraud, could not by any Means hold with Respect to the Primitive Fathers. The Remark, which this Gentleman Himself makes after the Repetition of some more Popish Stories, is sufficient to shew the Disparity of these Cases, and is of great Use in forming a Judgment of all Cases, where the Belief of Miracles is proposed to our Assent. " Such Facts as these should be allowed to be " examined by Enemies as well as Friends, and by " that Means freed from Doubt ; for the mere Attestations of interested Parties are not sufficient to remove Suspicions, or to gain Credit to what is improbable in the Nature of the Thing." (P. 50.)

The next Remark, which is offered to Us, is on the Manner in which, or Instrument by which Miracles are reported to have been done. These have sometimes been objected to as trifling and ridiculous, and a very competent Answer has often been given, that if they are credible in other Respects, They cannot be incredible merely in this, because herein They are similar to several Instances recorded in the Scriptures, which are allowed to have been sufficiently attested : and if the Attestation be sufficient, the Power of God is the more conspicuous in the Meanness of the Instruments by which He thinks fit to work. But, says this Gentleman, " tho' the modern Miracles may be like the scriptural " ones in many Circumstances, yet That is by no Means " an Evidence of Truth." (P. 52.) Was it ever pretended that it was ? Where are the Writers, who have argued the Truth of a Fact merely from its being said to be brought about in the same Manner as some confessed Miracles were, which are recorded in the Sacred Writings ? The Testimony of the Witnesses is always referred to as the positive Evidence of the Fact, and this Consideration is introduced only to take off the Force of the Objection from the particular Manner in which it is said to be done ; and to shew that

that the Thing is capable of being proved, if the Witnesses upon Examination are found to be both duly informed, and honestly disposed. That indeed is a very distinct Question, but if their Testimony can stand the Test, then any Exception against a Form, which is thought mean or strange, is sufficiently removed, if it answers to the Method heretofore used by Providence in the Operation of Miraculous Works. If the Exception would have been as strong against the Manner or Instruments of Miracles recorded in the Sacred History, and yet is allowed to be of no Force against them, then neither is it of Force against Others that are well attested. This is a Way of Reasoning that must be conclusive to all Believers, and the Use of it is this, and no other, than to shew that the Fact is not incredible in itself, but that it may admit of Proof. The Nature and Weight of the Proof ought to be examined, and must be determined by other Considerations.

“ The material Point,” continues this Gentleman, “ is, 1st, What Weight ought to be allowed to Testimony in Cases of miraculous Reports? And, 2dly, “ When Miracles are related by different Writers, “ e. g. by Sulpitius Severus, and by a Sacred Writer, why is the One defended at the same Time that “ the Other is rejected? Why should not both be condemned as fictitious, or Both be admitted as true “ Facts, since Both depend upon Evidence to Us, “ at this Distance, well vouched by the best Human “ Authority?” (P. 53.) This is putting the Question in a very strong Light, and reminds me of a very proper Caution added afterwards in this very Treatise, that “ it behoves all, who regard the Religion of “ Christ, so to treat of the Miracles of other Times, “ as not to throw insuperable Difficulties on those of “ our Saviour and his Apostles.” Some will be apprehensive, that This is the Case here, and that the Objection is here both clearer and stronger than the Solu-

tion. *The Distinction in Favour of the Gospel-Miracles is referred to its proper Head, the 2d previous Question: But I should have been glad to have seen a clearer State, and more explicit Determination of the first Point in this its proper Place, namely, "What Weight ought to be allowed to Testimony in Cases of Miraculous Reports?" The whole Tenour of the Reflections hitherto offered by this Gentleman seems to be to shew, that the Improbability of a Miracle is so great as to outweigh any Assurance which We can have of the Personal Qualifications of Witnesses; and tho' We have now and then been favoured with a Concession to the contrary, yet this Observation has soon been repeated, and our Memories have been refreshed with the Incredibility of every Faët, which does not answer to Experience, or which is contrary to the Course of Nature. Every Rule, which We might hope to take Advantage of for establishing the Belief of any Miracles proposed to Us, is weakened by some Clause, which defeats the Effect; and the Result of this whole Dissertation, as summed up by the Author of it, is this, that "He has shewn, that Human Testimony, how much soever it is valued in common Cases, has not an equal Deference paid to it in miraculous ones."* (P. 59.) Should He not have distinguished, whether He here spoke of the Fact, or of the Reason of the Thing? His Argument must suppose Him to speak of the latter, that Men judge rightly in rejecting all Human Testimony in miraculous Reports; and then a Concern for the Credit of the Gospel might well suggest the Enquiries following that Observation. But then He ought likewise to be reminded of the Concessions extorted from Him by Truth, that where extraordinary Reasons appear for extraordinary Interpositions; or where a like Reason appears for a Faët like to an extraordinary one, of the Truth of which We are already convinced; and where these are established by Witnesses unexceptionable

both

both for their Abilities and Integrity, with Offers of Free Inquiry to all Opposers, there such Facts may become credible; when these Concessions are thus collected and applied, tho' the Incredibility of a Miracle in itself be repeated to Us a thousand Times, yet in any Sense of it that is consistent with those acknowledged Principles, We shall find no Cause to be under any Apprehensions for the Authority of the Miracles wrought in the Apostles Times, or in those immediately succeeding them.

But before He concludes this first previous Question, He says, that "there is another Case, which must not be passed over in Silence. We may easily suppose it possible to have a Difference in the Narration of the same Fact: That One may relate it so, as to make it all miraculous; and Another may speak of it in such a Manner, as not to imply any Miracle at all. Which Account then ought We to give the Preference to? Or what are We to believe? Or how are We to assent?" (P. 54.) This was introduced only to invalidate the Account of a Miracle said to be wrought in a later Age than Those which I am concerned with. The Case has many Years ago been considered at large by a much abler Hand, and the Objections now offered against it been obviated; but whether upon the whole it be thought to deserve Credit or not, it affects not the Question of the Continuance of Miracles till the Civil Establishment of Christianity. As far as the Case now stated by this Gentleman, as worthy of special Notice, can be thought to relate to the Grounds of the Credibility of Miracles in general, I answer that it is a clear and acknowledged Rule, that all doubtful Passages and Testimonies are to be explained by those which are more plain and full, and are of equal Authority. If Two good Witnesses report the same Case, the One in so ambiguous a Manner as that it may be interpreted either of a natural or super-

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natural

natural Event, the Other in clear and express Terms, incapable of Evasion, confining the Account directly to a Miracle, if there be no Exception to Either of their Characters, there can be no Doubt but that We must explain the One Testimony consistently with the Other, and understand the Case of a miraculous Event. This is certainly the Rule in all like Cases of Doubt, but this Gentleman thinks that it varies here. “ In two different Relations, says He, of the same Fact, Probability will always be on the Side of Reason and Experience rather than on the Side of the Miracle.” (P. 55.) This again will depend entirely on the Circumstances of the Case. The Reason of the Thing and the Experience of former Times may perhaps shew, that the Occasion was important and worthy of a Divine Interposition, and then the Probability will lie rather on the Side of the Miracle. If the Cause, after the strictest Examination, appears to be trifling, the Objection will lie on that Consideration, and not merely on the Incredibility of a Miracle in itself, as is continually insinuated.

The Second Previous Question comes next under Consideration, “ Upon what Grounds the Miracles of the Gospel in particular are credible?” The Difficulties thrown upon the Belief of all Miracles under the former Question, made it highly necessary to secure the Faith of Christians, and the Authority of the New Testament, by shewing some Distinction in Favour of the Miracles there recorded: and here this Author has acted a much better Part than Dr. M. did, and has endeavoured to point out a peculiar Circumstance as establishing the Belief of the Scriptural Miracles, tho’ all others should be given up as groundless.

His own Account of the Difficulty arising from his former State of the Case is as follows. “ It appears, says He, by what has been said, that in order to make the Evidence for any Fact in general credible,

“ ble, there must not only be the Relator worthy of
 “ Credit, but the Thing, that He relates, must be
 “ credible. If a Person be a Man of the greatest
 “ Abilities, and of Integrity indisputable, yet if the
 “ Thing reported be in its own Nature incredible,
 “ either because it is impossible in itself, or because it
 “ is confirmed by no Experience of our own, or of that
 “ of others; it is in Course either liable to be sus-
 “ pected, or perhaps to be entirely rejected. Upon
 “ what Foundation then does the Credit of our Sa-
 “ viour’s Miracles stand; since they are improbable in
 “ their own Nature, as being Facts beyond the Power
 “ of any Mortal to do, and are similar to Nothing
 “ that our common Experience teaches Us?” This,
 “ He says, was the Subject which He had principally
 “ in View.” (P. 59, 60.) The Variety and the
 Reality of our Saviour’s miraculous Works are then set
 forth in a very strong, convincing and comprehensive
 Method; but still this Objection remains against them
 in its full Force, that they are not similar to Any Thing
 that our common Experience teaches Us. But “ be-
 “ fore this Objection is removed, and it is shewn, that
 “ the Miracles of the Gospel are credible in them-
 “ selves, it is thought proper to enquire what Evi-
 “ dence they afford of the Truth of our Saviour’s
 “ being the Christ.” The Reason assigned for this
 is, “ that Miracles, considered as such, are no Proof
 “ of any Thing, but of extraordinary Power; or
 “ that the Person who does them, is assisted by some
 “ Being superior to Man. But Power, says He, does
 “ not imply Truth; nor does it follow, that He who
 “ can exert the greatest Strength, will therefore exert
 “ the greatest Veracity.” (P. 62.) This is the Lan-
 guage and Argument of Those, who have Designs in
 View very different from the Gentleman from whom I
 have copied them, who would abhor the Use to which
 this Method of Reasoning has been applied. And I ap-
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prehend that it is not only groundless in itself, but that it has carried Him into a more tedious, more confined, and less satisfactory Method of confirming our Saviour's Authority, than might have been deduced immediately from the Consideration of his Miracles. That Argument is more direct, more perspicuous, more universally convincing, than such a Connection as must suppose Men to believe the Old Testament before They can be brought thereby to believe the New. But, says this Gentleman, " Miracles, considered as such, are no
 " Proof of any Thing but of extraordinary Power;
 " or that the Person, who does them, is assisted by
 " some Being superior to Man." This But which He makes so light of, is all that is wanting to form a Demonstrative Argument in Favour of Pretensions so supported. The Acknowledgment of it as an undoubted Evidence of the Assistance of some superior Being will end in a clear Proof of the Heavenly Authority of those who offered Miracles to the World. No, it is said, " Power does not imply Truth; nor does it follow,
 " that He who can exert the greatest Strength, will
 " therefore exert the greatest Veracity." The contrary Proposition seems to me demonstrable from the Moral Attributes of the Deity, and very clearly to be made good from the State of the Question as proposed by this Author Himself. For the Case in Point is that of supernatural Power, the Assistance of some Being superior to Man in the extraordinary Operation. Nay some Kind of Competition is implied in the Expression of their being able to exert the greatest Strength, who are supposed not to exert the greatest Veracity. Now This appears to me to be inconsistent with the Belief of the Divine Wisdom and Providence. For if miraculous Power without any Opposition, or a greater Degree of it upon a Competition, may be exerted in Favour of a Falshood, then either there must be some Being independent of God, who can thus
 support

support such a Cause; or God Himself must be supposed to permit such a Power, such a superior Power, to be exerted for the Confirmation of feigned Pretensions to the unavoidable Deception of his Creatures. Now Either of these Suppositions are too hard for my Faith, and much more incredible than many Articles which are daily charged with that Imputation. But if there be no Being equal to, or independent of the Author of Nature; if the Author of Nature be too wise, and good, and holy, to empower any other Beings to work Miracles on Purpose to deceive Us; then an Acknowledgment of our Saviour's miraculous Works is a direct and immediate Proof of his Pretensions without farther Argumentation. If the Origin of all Power be likewise the Origin of all Truth, how can it be said, that the former does not imply the latter, when We are speaking of supernatural Interpositions? If the Stress be laid on considering Miracles as such, that is, out of all Connection with the Pretensions of Those who are said to be endued with them, and in this Light merely they are said to be no Proof of any Thing but of extraordinary Power, then We may answer that this is an imaginary Case, which does not correspond with Fact, and can be of no Use in Speculation. Miracles never were, nor ever were pretended to be wrought for the Amusement of Mankind, merely to exhibit extraordinary Power; and therefore why should We state Cases which never existed, and which it is so easy to foresee will be made an ill Use of, and perverted to the Prejudice of real Facts? A standing Power of working Miracles never was claimed but in Support of some Pretensions, and if those Miracles were real, the Truth of those Pretensions will be established. It is allowed that they are a Proof of the Assistance of some Being superior to Man, and according as that Being is supposed to be Good or Bad, the End may be supposed to be so too, which is served by it; but a Superior Being
of

of either Character cannot be thought to lend such supernatural Assistance merely for the Diversion of Human Creatures. Miracles then prove something more than extraordinary Power; they prove the Interposition of a superior intelligent Agent, who must be supposed to act on some Occasion or other, suitable to his own Nature, and worthy his extraordinary Interposition. And then the plain Question will be, whether the God of Truth would lend his supernatural Power to support a Lie, or permit evil Beings to support it in that Manner, without restraining them in the Exercise of their Power, or overbalancing it by the Display of his superior Might. Now We Believers know from Revelation, what we might have presupposed by the Light of our own Reason, that in Fact God Almighty never did suffer Evil Spirits to impose upon Mankind by real Miracles, at least not without such a Manifestation of his greater Glory, as might be a very sufficient Guard against the Delusion. It is not necessary on this Occasion to determine whether the Egyptian Sorcerers acted truly by the Assistance of a superior Being, or whether They only counterfeited Appearances, and played their Tricks by Legerdemain. On the latter Supposition their Delusions were detected by the farther and greater Instances of real Miracles offered by Moses, which could not be counterfeited: On the former, the Power of those Evil Spirits, by whose Assistance They acted, was shewn to be limited and derived, and unable to withstand, when the Finger of God interposed in Support of his own Servants. Either Way the Connection of Power and Truth was very properly established, and sufficient Remedy was offered against all Pretensions to Miracles in Favour of Fraud and Imposture.

This Connection is so obvious, that I do not see the Necessity of proceeding in so remote and distant a Method as this Gentleman does in his Enquiry what Evidence

dence Miracles afford of the Truth of our Saviour's Mission. His Reflections are just and well adapted for the Conviction of a Jew, but, according to his own Scheme, they are loaded with Difficulties, which will yield Matter of much Objection to Deists. If Miracles prove Nothing but Power, and if We must take in the Prophecies of the Old Testament, before We can urge our Saviour's supernatural Works in Proof of his Mission, then We have a much wider Field of Controversy, and more intricate Course of Argument to maintain, in order to convince Gainsayers, than I can apprehend to be necessary. What our Blessed Lord says of Himself, The same Works that I do, bear Witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. *John v. 36.* is as applicable and as convincing to Gentiles as to Jews. As He conversed chiefly with the latter, He sometimes referred to the Prophecies concerning Himself, and He sometimes also refers to his Miracles, without the least Notice of any Predictions, as immediately and directly proving a Divine Mission. The Works that I do in my Father's Name, they bear Witness of me. *John x. 25,* and again, If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not; But if I do, tho' Ye believe not me, believe the Works, and then He adds the Doctrine which They were to believe on this Evidence, not that merely of the Prophets, at least not that which They acknowledged as such; but what was now new to them, and advanced upon the Authority of the Proposer of it: That Ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in Him. *v. 38.* According then to our Saviour's Way of arguing, these Works of the Father, that is supernatural Works, prove something more than Power; They prove the Assistance of the Father, who would not assist in the Support of a Lie; and consequently they prove the Truth of the Doctrines delivered by Him, who is thus supported. A Claim of a Divine Mission, attested by

by Works plainly miraculous, is represented by our Lord as valid and unquestionable, and what the Spectators ought to acquiesce in; and This alone was sufficient, and was often urged alone to establish his Pretensions. To the Jews who knew that the Coming of the Messiah had been foretold under such and such Circumstances, Miracles might be of some Use to obviate their Objection from the appearing Contrariety of some Prophecies, and the Want of Completion as yet of Others; and They were at least of as much Force to Heathens, who lay not under those Difficulties, to prove directly the Divine Authority of the Person thus commissioned.

I shall pass over therefore the ensuing Pages on the Prophecies concerning Christ, and particularly the unscriptural Account of the Stress that is laid on his Death, as foreign to the Point of the Credibility of Miracles, and shall proceed to the next Reflection relating to that Subject. "Be it so then," says this Gentleman, "that Miracles, in general, are no Arguments of any Thing but Power, yet when any particular Miracle is applied in Attestation of a Person, to whom many Characters belonged, and in whom Some were already fulfilled, and others would in due Course of Time be fulfilled; the Miracle proves the Attestation of some Being, superior to Man, to the Truth of the Thing asserted." (P. 66, 67.) This Concession is material, and I would ask, Is this the only Case in which a Miracle proves such Attestation? This Case as stated in the Completion of some Prophecies, and the Want of the Completion of Others, is attended with some Advantages and some Difficulties; and is it not equally true, that where there is neither of these with Respect to Prophecy, but where a Person declares Himself commissioned by God to reveal some salutary Truths to Mankind, and appeals to miraculous Powers for his Credentials, those Miracles,

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if true, will prove the Attestation of God Himself to the Truth of what is asserted? The Denial of this must end in some of the Absurdities before specified; but I observe that Most of these Gentlemen seem rather to avoid the Question than to give a direct Answer. There follow in this Paragraph, some less explicit Remarks on the supposed Knowledge of the Revealer—on its seeming natural to conclude that Superior Beings have more extensive Views, and more enlarged Capacities, &c. and on the Probability that They when they interpose, will declare the Truth. To this it is obvious to answer that the most powerful Beings derive their Power from God, and are restrained by Him in the Exercise of it. They will not be permitted to work Miracles uncontroled in Support of Falshood, and therefore, if their Miracles are genuine, it is more than a Probability that they declare the Truth.

We now return once more to the main Point. “Are not,” it is said, “the Miracles of our Saviour as incredible in themselves as any other Miracles related in History?” (P. 69.) The Uncertainty of all Human Authority arising from many different Causes, the little Regard paid to Heathen and Popish Writers in their Report of supernatural Events are again remarked; and the Distinction is properly enquired after, why the Gospel Miracles should be admitted, and the others rejected, when both are very fully attested. The Words in which this Question is here stated by this Author, would very sufficiently point out the Difference, and answer all the Difficulties, but those which Himself has started from the Incredibility of Miracles as such, that is, as being contrary to the Course of Nature and of Experience. He says in this Place, and says justly, that “the Things said to be done by Popish Writers are such, that No One can pay any Credit to them. They
“ seem

“ seem to be rather the frantic Follies of Madmen, in
 “ many Instances, than the Actions of any serious, rea-
 “ sonable Creatures.” (P. 70.) This certainly yields
 a very strong Objection against the Credibility of
 them; but it is such an One as does not hold against
 the Miracles of our Saviour. They were calculated to
 do Good, and to teach others to do so, and were every
 way reasonable and worthy the Original They pre-
 tended to. This therefore is a clear and manifest Dis-
 tinction, why the Miracles of our Saviour might well
 be admitted, tho’ those of the Papists be rejected,
 even if the Credit of the Witnesses was equal in both
 Cases; which I can by no Means allow. But the
 Difficulty raised by this Gentleman is not solved by this
 Distinction, but remains as yet in its full Force. Our
 Saviour’s Miracles were as incredible in themselves,
 as He terms it, that is, as contrary to Nature and
 Experience, as any others, and if such Incapability
 outweighs any Assurance that We can have of the Per-
 sonal Qualities of Witnesses, as We were before taught,
 then this Objection will be an insuperable Bar to our
 Belief, and We can never get over it but by unsaying
 it again, and allowing that these Things incredible
 in themselves are yet capable of being proved by pro-
 per Testimony. And this Course We shall happily find
 taken in the ensuing Pages, where Every Thing is gi-
 ven up, which the Reflections under the first previous
 Question laboured to oppose.

In answer to these Questions, “ Must All Mira-
 “ cles be admitted, because they are well vouched? Or
 “ must they all be rejected, because they are incredible
 “ in themselves, notwithstanding they are well attest-
 “ ed?—Or is there any Medium, by which We may
 “ distinguish between such as ought to be received, and
 “ such as ought to be rejected?” This Gentleman offers
 the following Observations:

“ As

“ *As Miracles may possibly be done by the Interposi-*
 “ *tion of some Being superior to Man, so it must be*
 “ *owned, that they may be faithfully related, exactly*
 “ *as the Event was: And whenever they are faith-*
 “ *fully related, they become as much the proper Ob-*
 “ *jects of Belief, as any other historical Facts what-*
 “ *ever. The Power of our Saviour, or of his Apostles,*
 “ *in Virtue of supernatural Assurances, to cure a Sick,*
 “ *or a Lame Man, or to raise a Dead One, implies*
 “ *no Contradiction, nor is it an impossible Conception;*
 “ *and therefore such a Power may possibly be exerted.*
 “ *And the Testimony of an Eye-Witness may be*
 “ *faithfully set down in Words; and what convinced*
 “ *a Spectator of the Truth of any extraordinary*
 “ *Fact, may be worthy of Credit. Suppose then the*
 “ *Relator to be no ways credulous; to be faithful; to*
 “ *be a Man of Judgment and Integrity; to be not*
 “ *weak and superstitious; nor to have any other Inte-*
 “ *rest to serve, but that of Right and Truth—Such*
 “ *Testimony may be credible in Matter of Miracle,*
 “ *as well as in common Cases. For Miracles, how*
 “ *much soever above the Power of Man, are not*
 “ *above the Powers of Beings superior to Man;*
 “ *and therefore may be done by such Interposition.”*
 (P. 71.)

This State of the Case appears to be not only right
 and true, but to be a direct Reversal of all that was
 before offered against the Credibility of Miracles as
 such, as not answering to any Thing which We Our-
 selves have seen or heard of, and as outweighing any
 Assurance which We can have of the Personal Quali-
 ties of the Witnesses. It is now allowed that Miracles
 may be done; that they may be sufficiently distinguished,
 recorded and attested; and that in such a Case they
 may be as credible as any common Facts. This is
 as favourable a Decision of the previous Questions
 as the Adversaries of Dr. M. would desire, and will
 obviate

obviate all the Difficulties which seemed to be intended against them. It is added, that "Circumstances may be such as to counterballance the Incredibility of the Thing;" and that, "if the Incredibility of the Thing can be any ways removed, then the Credibility of the Person may be such, as to make his Relation of any Fact credible." The removing the Incredibility of Things incredible in themselves is a new Scheme to me; however I am glad it can be done, if it be necessary to establish the Miracles of the Gospel; and I will examine, if the same Method that is used to that Purpose, may not be of some Use likewise to establish those which are said to have been wrought in the Primitive Church. "Let Us suppose," says this Writer, "the Miracles of our Saviour to be Facts as incredible in themselves as other Miracles are; yet if such Circumstances can be shewn in Favour of his Miracles, as will shew a Credibility of a supernatural Interposition, in Order to produce them; then the Credibility of the Persons relating them, will give them actual Credit." (P. 72.) And then I add, that if such Circumstances can be shewn to continue in Favour of the Miracles of his Apostles, and their immediate Successors, as will shew a Credibility of a supernatural Interposition in order to produce them, then the Credibility of the Persons relating them will likewise give them actual Credit. Under this Head, the Credibility of those Persons, who have given us the History of our Saviour's miraculous Actions, is clearly illustrated and well expressed, and the concluding Remark upon it is, that "here the Objection, if any, must lie, not against the Witnesses, who are Persons of Credit, who saw and examined what They reported, and were not imposed on; but it must be against the Miracle itself, as a Thing incredible in its own Nature." This Difficulty as yet remains

remains in its full Force; and it is added, that “ if
 “ indeed the Miracles related are ridiculous them-
 “ selves, or have no End, or a bad One, they may
 “ justly be rejected, let the Historian be otherwise
 “ ever so able and judicious; because in such Cases
 “ no Arguments can be brought, which will remove
 “ the Difficulty arising from the Incredibility of the
 “ Thing itself.” (P. 74.) I shall only on this Oc-
 casion repeat the Danger of our mistaking in our
 Judgment concerning Miracles which are represented
 as ridiculous, or as having no End, or a bad one. For if,
 according to the State of the Case before Us, “ the
 “ Historians themselves have all those Qualities,
 “ which are requisite to make them believed, Faithful-
 “ ness, Abilities, Resolution to speak the Truth, and
 “ a Detestation of Falshood, and were Eye-Witnesses of
 “ what They relate,” in such a Case I should rather
 suspect my own Judgment than theirs, and should impute
 the Appearance of the Grounds for such Charges to my
 own narrow and partial View, till a strict Examina-
 tion had convinced me of the contrary. The Point
 in View at present is, where the Witnesses are in every
 Respect unexceptionable, what Circumstances shall so
 confirm the original Incredibility of a Miracle in
 itself, as to render it absolutely and finally incredible.
 Its answering a bad End would indeed be an insu-
 perable Objection, but this would be inconsistent with
 the Qualities already supposed and specified of these
 competent Witnesses, and is therefore an imaginary
 Case. Its answering no End, may mean no more
 than none that We can see, which is no unfurmoun-
 table Difficulty; for They, who wrought it, might
 discern a proper Occasion for it, tho’ We do not; and
 if They were such as claimed a Divine Commission to
 instruct and reform Mankind, Any Act of Power ex-
 erted under such a Claim, answered evidently a gene-
 ral

ral and very important End. The supposed Ridiculousness of a Miracle as distinct from those Objections already specified, must relate to the Manner in which it is wrought; and I would be glad to know, where the End is worthy of a Divine Interposition, where the Witnesses are every way qualified and disposed to attest the Truth, what Method of interposing supernaturally shall be thought to render the whole Account incredible, if it be attended with no other Exception. Every Event is liable to be turned to Ridicule; Unusual Ones, and such as are contrary to the Course of Nature, are still more liable than others; and have been so turned by Scepticks; but Believers, who know that the Methods of interposing by Miracles have been various, and that such as have at first born a surprizing Appearance, have yet upon Examination proved to be genuine, should be cautious how They give a Handle to ridicule the Truth, or to make Objections, which Unbelievers will retort upon the Matters of their Belief. The Truth of this Case seems to be this, that where a Miracle reported is really ridiculous in the Form or Manner of working it, it is always exceptionable likewise or defective in the Evidence; and other Circumstances concur to shew the Incredibility of it.

*The 2d Observation offered to remove the Incredibility of Things so incredible in themselves as all Miracles are represented to be, is this; “ It must be
 “ owned that God may at any Time, or in any Place,
 “ interpose; and, if He thinks fit, He may cure Dis-
 “ eases, heal the Sick, or restore Eyes to the Blind,
 “ or Feet to the Lame, or relieve any distressed Per-
 “ son, and restore Him to his Health with or with-
 “ out any visible Means: And such Cases as these
 “ may be faithfully related, and the Facts may claim
 “ Belief, if really done.” This Concession of the Possibility of Miracles is soon abated and ballanced by
 this*

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this Remark, that they are “ possible only, and not
 “ much confirmed by Experience, and that therefore
 “ Other People have a Right to suspect or doubt
 “ of the Truth of them, how much soever the Party
 “ relieved may have Reason to be thankful for the
 “ Benefit received :” (P. 74.) And then ensues this
 general Observation as the Result of the Whole, which
 I cannot think contributes to aid our Conceptions, or
 to obviate the Difficulties usually started on this Sub-
 ject. “ If the Credibility of the Relator outweighs
 “ the Improbability of such extraordinary Interposition,
 “ the Fact will be admitted ; but if the Reverse hap-
 “ pens, it will be rejected.” (P. 75.) Compare this
 with the forementioned Assertion, that the “ Impro-
 “ bability of miraculous Events outweighs any Assu-
 “ rance that We can have of Personal Qualities,”
 and I am afraid We shall gain but little towards esta-
 blishing the Belief of any Miracles from the Con-
 cession in the former Part of this Paragraph : At
 least We gain no Mark of Distinction, by which We
 may determine what Particulars, when proposed to our
 Assent, should be admitted or rejected.

I very readily agree with this Writer in his Reflec-
 tions on the unreasonable Consequences, which artful
 or ignorant People annex to their Belief of Miracles ;
 and I have had Occasion to make the same Reflections
 in the ensuing Papers ; but I cannot discern the Use or
 Pertinence of them under this Head : I cannot perceive
 how they are connected with the Point in View, that
 is, how they point out the Difference, why the Mira-
 cles of the Gospel, as contrary to the Course of Nature,
 and therefore as incredible in themselves as others,
 according to his State of the Case, should be admitted,
 tho’ all others be rejected.

It is observed, 3dly, that “ the End of a Miracle
 “ may be good, i. e. it may be conceived to answer a
 “ good Purpose ; but yet this is not always sufficient

“ to make it credible.” (P. 76.) *It is sufficient to remove the Charge of Incredibility in the Thing itself, which is all the Purpose, which it is urged to serve. Whether upon the Whole it deserves Credit, will depend on the Notoriety of the Fact, and the Testimony of competent Witnesses; but if it is apparently calculated to answer some good End, this will be a presumptive Circumstance at least in its Favour, and will shew that it is capable of being proved. This Gentleman goes on to add, that “ it is hard for Us to say, “ (if it be possible at all) to how many, or to what “ Degree, Good must be extended, in order to the “ Belief of a Miracle.” (P. 77.) I cannot apprehend that there is any Difficulty at all in this Case, if it be rightly stated. The Belief of a Miracle does not rest merely on the extensive Good, which it is said to serve, however necessary this may be as a preliminary Article, but on the external Evidence with which it is offered to our Assent. A Report of a supernatural Interposition may appear to answer a very important Purpose, and yet may fail in some capital Point respecting the Witnesses, so as to be finally and deservedly rejected. Another Report of the miraculous Kind may serve a less extensive Benefit, and yet may come so well recommended by able, inquisitive, sagacious, faithful, disinterested Witnesses, as to gain and almost extort Assent. When therefore this Gentleman proceeds to ask, “ Will a Good done to a single Person be sufficient to “ make One give Credit to the Report?” The ready Answer is, this Circumstance alone will not confirm it, but it will shew that it may be confirmed, if the Evidence offered in Proof of it, does upon Examination of it, stand unexceptionable. We Believers know that Providence has thought such an Occasion deserving of his extraordinary Protection and Interposition, and therefore We cannot consistently fix our Objection on this Point, if the Attestation offered be unexceptionable in every other.*

This

This Remark will obviate the Force of the following Questions and Answers. “ Is the Vindication of Innocency in single Persons a sufficient Good to authorize, or give Credit to such miraculous Accounts? “ No. Such Miracles done among the Heathens are “ not credited.” (P. 77, 78.) But why are they not credited? Not because the Occasions are unworthy of a Divine Interposition, but because they fail in Point of Evidence, because related by Historians in After-Ages, against whose Testimony there lies a Variety of Exceptions. Again, “ Is the granting Health to the Sick, and “ Strength to the Weak and Lame, an End sufficient “ to give Credit to a Miracle done for such Purposes? “ We refuse Assent to a thousand Stories of this Sort, “ which Popish Writers are constantly relating.” (P. 79.) We do so, but not as thinking the Facts unworthy of God to perform, but as defective in many Respects in the Evidence with which they are proposed to Us. The Relief of Innocent and Distressed Persons by supernatural Interposition is such an End as can yield no Objection from the Nature of it, yet this Consideration alone will not authorize the Report, or entitle it to our Assent. It shews Nothing more than that it may be true; the Authority, on which it is reported, remains to be examined, and must stand a strict Examination before it can reasonably expect to be credited.

It is added, 4thly, that “ It has been suggested, “ that as the Miracles done by Christ and the Apostles, “ were done in Confirmation of the Truth of the Christian Religion, so the Miracles done since those Times “ were done for the same End. They were done to “ confirm the Truths of the Gospel, and since They “ were done to promote the same End as the Miracles “ of Christ were, and They are related by Eye-Witnesses, or by Men of Abilities, and exact Enquirers “ into their Truth, they are all equally to be believed.” (P. 78.) There follows as favourable an Acknowledgment

ledgment as could be desired, that if the Suggestion be supported, the Inference would hold good; that "if it
 " be proved that the Miracles done by the Saints, were
 " done to confirm the Old Religion, they ought to
 " be equally credited with those of the Gospel. For
 " Facts of the same Sort, done for the same End, are
 " equally credible." But supposing the Facts to be done,
 How do We know, says He, " that they were done for
 " the same End?" We can know this only from the
 Declaration of those, who claimed the Power, and that
 is explicit and clear enough to this Purpose. Why, says
 He, " Does it appear that St. Martin or Macarius,
 " or any other Saint, ever declared that this was the
 " End of their Miracles?" (P. 79.) This is a pre-
 vious Question, which no way concerns those Answerers
 of Dr. M. who confined their Defence to those Miracles
 preceding the Civil Establishment of Christianity. If
 Those, who came after, did not assign this as the End
 for which they wrought supernatural Works, This shews
 the great Difference of their Claims, and is a Distinc-
 tion which, amongst others, may reasonably be insisted on,
 to illustrate the superior Credibility of those supernatural
 Endowments, which are so solemnly attested during the
 three first Centuries. For did not the Apologists in that
 Interval urge them as Arguments in Confirmation of the
 Truth of the Gospel? Did not Justin Martyr, Ter-
 tullian, Minucius Felix, Origen, and Lactantius
 appeal to the Miraculous Powers of Christians in Proof
 of the Truth of their Pretensions? What this Gentle-
 man observes, with Respect to our Blessed Lord, is
 applicable likewise to them; that " there was no Oc-
 " casion, or Necessity, that They should, upon working
 " every Miracle that They did, expressly declare,
 " for what End They did it." (P. 80.) Since in their
 Discourses professedly written in Vindication of their Re-
 ligion, They urge these supernatural Works in Evidence
 of its Divine Authority, it could not be necessary, when
 every

every one was wrought to say, *This is done to prove the Truth of Christianity. Their Claim being known, each Miracle of Course was considered in that Light; and however true it may be with Respect to the Saints of After-Ages, that "there is generally a profound Silence " why or for what End all their Miracles were " done,"* (P. 79.) Yet it is not so in Regard to the earlier Apologists. They with one Consent say that God had continued these miraculous Powers in the Church to confirm the Faith of Believers; whereas Some of the later Writers own that the extraordinary Gifts given for this End were withdrawn. Since therefore the Miracles of the Primitive Church for the three first Centuries, are said to have been wrought for the same End as those of the Gospel, so far they are, as this Gentleman allows, equally credible. No Objection, at least, can lie against them on this Account, and if the Witnesses are in other Respects unexceptionable, They will deserve and meet with Credit: For certainly the End alledged was well worthy of a Divine Interposition.

The 5th Observation, after a Repetition of the Success of many Impostures, and the Improbability of all Miracles at first View, ends in these Inquiries. "Is
" there any Test by which We may judge of the Mira-
" cles done by our Lord and his Disciples, and know
" that they were really done? Or can We point out any
" Difference betwixt them and those that have been
" done, or are pretended to have been done, since those
" Times, so as to make the One more credible than the
" Other? Or, in short, How may We fairly point
" out the Difference betwixt what We are to believe,
" and what we are to reject?" (P. 81.) This is a laudable Attempt, and it will not, I hope, be thought a blameable one, if I attend to the Reasonings here used, and observe how far they may justly be applied to establish or to weaken the Credibility of the Miracles of the Primitive Church.

*It is said, " that the Argument for the Truth or
 " Credibility of the Miracles of Christ and the Apostles
 " not only has all the Advantages which the Argument
 " for any other Historical Fact has; but has likewise
 " an additional Strength, which almost all other past
 " Facts are deficient in." (P. 83.) It does not seem
 necessary to me to depreciate the Evidence for the Mira-
 cles in the Ages immediately succeeding, in order to esta-
 blish those of the Apostolical Age; or to assert this Defi-
 ciency in almost all other past Facts to support the
 additional Strength of those preceding ones. However,
 let not an Assertion determine the Point, but let the Case
 be fairly examined and determined; and God forbid that
 I should deny any Superiority of Evidence, which really ap-
 pears in Favour of the Miracles of the Gospel.*

*It is said, " First, They have the Attestation of
 " Men of Probity and Integrity, that many Facts were
 " done by them, which were superior to any Powers of
 " Men." (P. 83.) This is most certainly true of the
 Miracles of the Gospel; but it will be no Prejudice to
 that Truth to say, that those of the Primitive Church
 have likewise this Advantage. They are attested by the
 unanimous Suffrage of Persons every way qualified to
 judge of them. I may justly apply the well-chosen Words
 of this Gentleman to this Purpose. " All the Topics
 " taken from sufficient Information, Ability to know,
 " and Honesty to relate; the Persecutions They under-
 " went for the Truth of their Testimonies; their Con-
 " sciousness of the heinous Crime of Lying; their preach-
 " ing constantly their Accountableness to God for all
 " their Actions; and their Sense of the Justice of their
 " Damnation, who did Evil that Good might come
 " of it; their leaving all Things for the Truth of
 " Christ; their exposing themselves to Imprisonment, to
 " Stripes, to be stoned, to be shipwrecked, to all Sorts
 " of Hazards and Inconveniences for the Sake of Christ;
 " in short, every Topic that tends to confirm the Truth
 " of*

“ of the Things which the first Disciples of Christ wrote or taught, has here its fullest Strength.” This Gentleman seemed conscious that this Reply would be made; and therefore having so urged it, He answers, “ Be it so, I therefore add

“ Secondly, That the Enemies to Christianity have born their Testimonies to the Miracles of Christ, as well as the Friends of the Gospel; and consequently the Truth of the Gospel does not depend solely upon the Testimonies of Men that may be charged, or are pretended to be charged with Credulity, or Folly, or even Forgery itself.” (P. 84.) In this Respect likewise the Miracles of the Primitive Church are strongly recommended to our Assent. They are supported by the Testimony of Enemies as well as Friends. Some Proofs of this have been offered and more referred to in the ensuing Sheets. Dr. M. indeed was pleased to say that “ in the Performance of their Miracles they were always charged with Fraud and Imposture by their Adversaries.” (Free Inquiry, P. 22.) Such a Charge, I observed, was likely enough to come from Adversaries, and was of little Weight as coming from them: And I farther observed that this however was not universally brought, but that at other Times They shifted the Objection, and chose rather to suppose that their Miracles were wrought by the Assistance of Demons. Some Instances of this have been assigned, and the proper Remark on them is that which this Gentleman has made on Julian’s Mention of our Blessed Lord’s Miracles, “ Let them treat them in their own Manner, since They expressly allow such Facts to be done,” (P. 85.) Should other Passages be produced, wherein these Adversaries seem to deny the Reality of these Facts, and to mention them as Fables, This Gentleman will supply Us with another very pertinent Answer, that “ This will shew that They had no certain Scheme by which They could attack the Christians, and that
“ They

*“ They said any Thing either to lessen, or to calumniate
 “ what They could not fairly refute.” (P. 91.)*

*But upon a Review of Dr. M's Objection on this Head, which the Author of these previous Questions seems to confirm by mentioning the Testimony of Enemies as peculiar to the Miracles of Christ and his Apostles, I do not find that He has made good his Assertion in a single Instance, “ that the Primitive Christians in the
 “ Performance of their Miracles were always charged
 “ with Fraud and Imposture by their Adversaries.”* However true This may have been, yet it does not appear from any Proofs produced or referred to by Dr. M. Lucian is his first Author, and He is brought in as saying, that whenever any crafty Juggler, expert in his Trade, and who knew how to make a right Use of Things, went over to the Christians, He was sure to grow rich immediately, by making a Prey of their Simplicity. This might be, and was probably, intended as a Reflection on the Simplicity of the Christians, who are often so censured by their Adversaries as an artless and unimproved Set of Men, but certainly it implies no Kind of Charge of their being practiced and successful Themselves in exhibiting counterfeit Miracles. Had They been so, They would certainly have been more apt to suspect and more quick at detecting others that came into their Society with such Pretensions, so that a crafty Juggler would not have thrived so well amongst them. The Account itself was probably an abusive Misrepresentation; but supposing it to be true, All that We could reasonably infer from it would be, that as They knew that many real Miracles were wrought amongst them, They were too apt to give Credit to all such Pretensions, and thereby to give Encouragement to Some who pretended to them without any Foundation. Such a Supposition must imply their own Innocence in this Respect; for a Consciousness of a like Prevarication in themselves would have made them
 more

more suspicious and more cautious in giving their own Assent to Others.

Nor is Celsus's Testimony any more to the Purpose. We are told that "He represents all the Christian Wonder-Workers as mere Vagabonds and common Cheats." (Free Inquiry, P. 23.) And to support this We are presented with a Quotation from one Place, and a Reference and Translation of another Place in Origen's Book against Celsus. But in neither of these Places is there a Word of any Christian-Wonder-Workers, as the Dr. most ingeniously phrases it. In the first Place there quoted Celsus speaks (as Dr. Church well observes) not of any particular Wonder-Workers, but of Christians in general. * He calls Us Deceivers, the Reason follows — ὅτι φεύγομεν χαλετέρες κ. τ. λ. He would insinuate that Christians were generally ignorant and unlearned, and from thence would infer that Christianity itself was an Imposture, and the Teachers of it Deceivers. But as to any Claim of miraculous Powers, there is not a Word relating to it either in Celsus's Objection, or Origen's Answer. The other Place is as little to his Purpose. Celsus had quoted that Passage of St. Paul—not many Wise Men after the Flesh, &c. from thence taking Occasion to represent Christians as ignorant and silly People; and then goes on to compare them to Jugglers, who avoided Men of Sense, and applied themselves wholly to the Ignorant and Unlearned. But not a Word is there here of Miracles, or of any Christian Wonder-Workers; Nor does Celsus say, as Dr. M. makes him say, that the Christians were Vagabonds and common Cheats, or that They play'd any Tricks. He compares them indeed to Jugglers, but that in this Respect only, that They avoided the wise and applied themselves to the ignorant. And even this Origen treats as a mere

* γόντας ημᾶς καλεῖ.

Calumny *. See here how He abuses Us? comparing Us to Jugglers in the Market Place. But what Tricks do We shew? Or what like this do We do? And again †, In this He only reviles us like Women scolding in the Streets. He afterwards goes on to answer the Objection itself, but does not say one Word of any Claim of Miracles. Yet this low Inveective, Dr. M. a Christian Divine, thought fit to retail, giving a false Translation, and altering the Sense to serve his Purpose; without taking Notice either of the Occasion which introduced these Words, or the Answer given to them. With Respect to this Testimony I shall only add, that it is very observable that throughout this whole Book of Origen, We do not find any Charge of Imposture laid against the Christians of those Days, or any Account of Frauds detected among them, or any Occasion given to Origen to make any Apology, or offer any Vindication of the Miracles of that Age. On the contrary We find him speaking boldly and confidently of those Miracles as of Things well known and undisputed. As to Dr. M's Quotation from Minucius Felix on this Occasion, it is not easy to say with what View He introduced it; unless to cast a Reflection on the first Christians and their Religion, it not having the least Reference to the Power or Claim of working Miracles. And tho' He is pleased to tell Us that Julian and Porphyry likewise charged the Primitive Christians with Fraud and Imposture in the Performance of their Miracles, yet he has not produced one Quotation from either of them to support the Assertion. If indeed He

* Ὅρα δὴ καὶ ἐν τέτοις τίνα τρόπον ἡμᾶς συκοφαντεῖ, ἑξομοιωῶν τοῖς ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς τὰ ἐπρηστότατα, ἐπιδεικνύμενοις καὶ ἀγείρουσι. Ποῖα δὴ ἐπρηστότατα ἐπιδεικνύμεθα; ἢ τί τέτοις παραπλήσιον πράττομεν; Orig. cont. Celf. P. 480. Ben. Ed.

† Ἐν τούτῳ οὐδ' ἐν ἄλλο ποιῶν, ἢ λοιδωρόμενος ἡμῖν παραπλησίως ταῖς ἐν ταῖς τριόδοις γυνάξιν σκοπὸν ἐχέσαις τὸ κακῶς ἀλλήλας λέγειν. (P. 482.)

bad, and had made it good by a Passage clear to the Purpose, it would only follow from hence that the Heathens were divided in their Opinion on this Subject, and were inconsistent with Each Other, and sometimes with themselves, in their Objections against their miraculous Deeds. This would not invalidate the other plain Testimonies of Adversaries allowing and accounting for the wonderful Works wrought amongst Christians; but would only shew that They had no certain Scheme, as this Gentleman observes, by which They could Attack the Christians: Whereas Dr. M. at least has failed even in this Point of proving that Any of their Enemies denied the Reality of these extraordinary Facts.

So far then the Miracles of the Primitive Church appear to have every Circumstance to establish their Credibility, which is as yet urged to establish those of the Gospel. They have the positive Attestation of Witnesses every way qualified to judge of them; and they have the farther Advantage of the Acknowledgment of their Genuineness even by Many of the Adversaries who were zealous to oppose the Cause in which they were wrought.

There remains one farther Observation. It is asserted, "Thirdly, that the Miracles of Christ have a peculiar Evidence which is strictly conclusive,—giving a Degree of Credibility which the Miracles of all other Persons are defective in." (P. 93.) This Evidence is, that our Saviour and his Apostles had the Power of foretelling future Events, which We see by the Completion of their Predictions in several Instances: And the Inference is that "when We are sure that Christ and his Apostles were under the Influence of some Power superior to that of Man, in one Instance, of which We Ourselves are competent Judges; We may be sure that the Miracles performed by them ought to be looked upon as credible, since the supernatural Power that enabled them to foretell future Events, was sufficient to enable them to work Miracles."

“cles.” (P. 101.) The intermediate Pages on the Completion of many of the Prophecies recorded in the New Testament, are so well drawn up that I should esteem it more Honour to have been Author of them, than of all the Rhetorick of the Free Inquiry; its Vindication and Defences. It is not a Matter of Choice that I differ in so many other Particulars from a Gentleman, who, in my poor Judgment, has so well treated this Part of the Argument. I shall offer however some Observations on this peculiar Circumstance.

*In the first Place it is no Part of the positive Evidence of the Miracles of the Gospel that they were attended with some prophetical Declarations. It is not urged so in this Place, but only as a presumptive Proof, as an Answer to, and Removal of a supposed Incredibility in all Reports of Miracles; for it is argued, that “the Being that enabled them to foretell Events
“at such distant Periods, and so minutely, might
“enable them to do what credible Witnesses have related concerning them.” But if there be no such absolute Incredibility in all Miracles as is supposed; if, in a softer Term, the general Improbability of them may be removed by other Circumstances, which may even raise a reasonable Expectation of such an Interposition, and if very credible Witnesses be produced, which positively relate them; then they may very well deserve and demand our Assent, tho’ they are not attended with prophetic Impulses; the supposed Objection being as effectually removed another Way. Prophecies do not imply Miracles, for Some whom We know to have had the Gift of the former, made no Pretensions to the latter. Neither do Miracles imply Prophecies, according to this Gentleman’s own Concessions. He professes that He “does not mean to affirm
“that all other Miracles are fictitious;” (P. 93. or
“that all Miracles are forged or counterfeit, that are
“not attended with Prophecy;” (P. 96.) If there-
fore*

fore the grand Difficulty concerning the Improbability of any miraculous Interposition can be taken off by some very pertinent and strong Argument, it will not be any Objection to other well-attested Miracles, that it was not done exactly in the same Method as in those of the Gospel, namely by the Concurrence of Predictions.

Now I conceive there is as strong an Argument to be produced to remove any such supposed Incredibility in Respect to the Miracles of the Primitive Church, as could possibly be brought in such a Case; and that is, the confessed Interposition of the Deity in a miraculous Manner in Favour of the same Cause, in the Age immediately preceding. As this Gentleman argued from Prophecies to Miracles, so argue I from the Miracles of the Apostolick Age to those next succeeding.—The same Being that enabled the first Disciples of Christ, to work so many and such evident Miracles in Proof of his Religion, might enable their Converts to do the same, whilst the like Difficulties, or greater, obstructed their Progress—and when We are sure that Christ and his Apostles were under the Influence of some Power superior to that of Man in the Performance of their wonderful Works, which We Ourselves acknowledge, We may be sure likewise that the Miracles of their Successors, if sufficiently attested, are in this Respect to be looked on as credible; since the supernatural Power that enabled the former to work their Miracles, was sufficient to enable the Others to do the same, in Vindication of the same Doctrine. Thus the grand Objection so much insisted on, from the Nature of miraculous Operations is fully removed, and there is Room to admit the Credibility of Witnesses. Thus the Prophecies tending to establish the Credibility of the Gospel-Miracles, do thereby concur in establishing those of the Ages next succeeding: And if the Witnesses in those Ages are unexceptionable in their Opportunities of knowing, judging, and reporting,

ing, and in their Integrity in making true Report, no Objection can here lie against Miracles as such; when We allow them to be wrought for the same Purpose but just before, and when no Circumstances had happen'd to alter the Case, at least not to alter it for the better, and to make Miracles less expedient than before. Whilst such Occasion continued, it is highly probable that such extraordinary Assistance should continue as We know to have been given in the like Situation; and the Incredibility spoken of all Miracles is not barely removed, but an Expectation is justly raised that here we should find them well attested. Where such Occasion for the Use and Application of Miracles ceases, there this Argument no longer holds; for tho' the Power of God is always the same, and equally able to lend such Assistance, yet the Credibility that He will interpose, is not always the same, but depends on Circumstances which may deserve such an extraordinary Interposition. It is sufficient to the present Purpose that this Credibility with Respect to the Use and Expediency of it continued in a good Degree of Force till the Civil Establishment of Christianity.

I would not be understood to say that during that whole Period there was equal Necessity for supernatural Interpositions; for the Occasion might vary in different Times and different Places within that Interval, according as the Gospel was more or less received in several Countries, and according as Persecutions did more or less rage in them. Where this Doctrine was newly preached and severely threatned, there this Kind of Assistance seemed most to be wanted, and is attested most to have been given. Where it had farther prevailed, or was most favourably tolerated; or where One of these Circumstances helped to take off the Disadvantage of the Other, there was the less pressing Necessity for the Continuance of these Miraculous Powers; which therefore, tho' not totally withdrawn

drawn, might well be expected gradually to decline even before the absolute Establishment of Christianity by the Civil Power : And to this Supposition and Argument on the Reason of the Thing, Fact and History do remarkably correspond.

It may farther be observed, that as the Credibility of the Gospel-Miracles is here urged from the Certainty of the Prophecies delivered by the same Persons who are said to have wrought them, so the very Fact which I am speaking of, the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Church after the Days of Christ and his Apostles, is itself a Completion of One of those Predictions, and thereby a Confirmation in this Light of the Truth of their Pretensions. That Prophetic Promise of our Lord, Mark xvi. 17, 18. that such supernatural Signs should follow them that believe, was not limited either by the Expression, or the Context, or the Reason of the Thing, or the Use and Intent of the Gifts, to the Apostolic Age, but was in every Respect applicable to Those who had the same or heavier Difficulties and Persecutions to struggle with : And when We find such a full and unanimous Attestation of their Continuance, This is a very strong Confirmation of the Arguments which might be raised on it in Speculation ; and thus the Prophecy and the Completion of it reflect Light and Strength on each other. That this Prediction was thus applicable to the persecuted Members of the Church in the three first Centuries, I have had Occasion to shew in the ensuing Reply, and need not therefore review the Dissertation of this Gentleman on this Subject.

I cannot but observe that however this whole Performance may appear calculated to serve or support the Cause of Dr. M. and his Defenders, yet the Author of it differs from them in the first fundamental Principle on which they set out. Dr. M. had asserted that “ No Force of Testimony can alter the Nature of Things.” Which Mr. Toll explains to mean, that “ no Force of Testimony can make a Thing credible that is in itself incredible.” Whereas this Gentleman allows that Miracles are incre-
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dible

dible in themselves, and yet, in *Vindication* of the *Miracles* of the *Gospel*, insists that they may be so circumstanced, as that a proper Force of Testimony may render them credible. It is not my Business to reconcile these Writers, but it has been my Endeavour to shew that these same Circumstances, which, according to this Gentleman can alter the Nature of Credibility, or can leave Room for Testimony to do it, are likewise of Weight in Favour of those Miracles, which are the Subject of the Free Inquiry; and that the Reasonings used on the two previous Questions, as far as they are conclusive and consistent, will not prejudice the Arguments on the remaining Question concerning the Continuance of Miracles in the Primitive Church.

To recapitulate in few Words the Arguments in Favour of them.—They are not incredible in themselves, unless all Miracles are so, for they are claimed under no less Authority than that of the Author of Nature; and his Power is allowed to be sufficient to the Purpose.—They are not incredible on the Occasion, for the Cause in which they are said to have been wrought, was worthy of God, no other than the Gospel of his Blessed Son.—They are not incredible in Respect of Time, for they were not revived after a long Cessation of them, but are said to have continued, as they might well be expected to do, from the Days of the Apostles, who are owned to have performed the same Wonders in Proof of the same Religion.—They are not incredible with Regard to their Use, for whilst the Rulers of this World persecuted this Profession, the Conversion of Heathens and the Support of Believers needed this Assistance as much as in the Apostolick Age.—They are not incredible in the Manner in which it is said they were wrought, for they were offered to publick Examination, and the Personal Security of the Professors of Christianity and the Success of their Religion were readily and openly staked upon the Reality of them.—They were not incredible in the Subject of them, being such as was parallel to that of those in the Gospel: Such as Providence might be supposed to be concerned

concerned in; such as was instrumental in removing the Darknes of Mens Minds, or healing the Infirmities of their Bodies;—Lastly, they are not incredible on Account of the Witnesses attesting them; who were not few, or weak, or false, or prejudiced, or interested Persons; but such as in every Respect deserve the utmost Credit. They are unanimous in their Account of Miracles; several of them are the Eloquent Apologists and Defenders of the Christian Faith; All of them Men of exemplary Truth and Piety: Many of Them Converts by these very Means to the Belief of this Religion, and Much the greater Part of them Confessors and Martyrs in this Cause.—When these Things are recollected, it will not, I hope, be insinuated, that I have “so treated of the Miracles done since the Apostolick Times, “as to throw insuperable Difficulties on those of our Saviour and his Apostles;” or that any farther Criteria are wanting “to shew the Difference, as to Credibility between Heathen and Popish Miracles, and those of the “Fathers.” (P. 102.)

However, the Caution against so treating of the Miracles of the Primitive Church as to hurt the Credit of the Apostolick ones, is, I confess, reasonable and important; and I desire to recommend it to the Advocates on the other Side. The Gentleman, whom I have taken the Liberty here to differ from in some Particulars, has exerted Himself in a Christian-like Manner to this Purpose; and his Example deserves the Imitation of those who espouse Dr. M's Cause. The main Point in Question having been differently represented as to its Connection with the Truth of Christianity, and it having, as Occasion served, been considered as a Point of great Consequence, or of no Consequence to that Cause, I shall hope to be indulged a Word or two more on that Subject.

Dr. M's Position considered simply and abstractedly by itself no way affects the Truth of the Gospel. God Almighty might, if it had so pleased Him, have endued the Apostles with the Power of working Miracles, and not have continued the same Power to their Successors. And in this Case
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the Truth of Christianity would have been sufficiently supported on the Foundation of those Miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles without the Aid of subsequent Miracles. But when We view the Thing as it stands in its present Circumstances; when We consider that the same Fathers, who bear Witness to the Genuineness of the Gospels, attest also strongly and uniformly, that Miracles were continued in their Times; if it should appear that They deceived Us in this Point, This must necessarily give Room to suspect that They might also deceive Us in other Points. If it should appear that the first Professors and Teachers of Christianity were all Fools or Knaves (and such they must have been, if they all jointly and separately attested as true what they knew, or might know to be false, and what, as some of them observe, Any One might at any Time be convinced of) this must unavoidably cast no small Discredit on their Religion itself.—Again, if We consider the Point as maintained and urged by Dr. M. when We find the same Arguments used against these Miracles, which are brought by Infidels against all Miracles whatsoever; when many of his Objections seem equally, or almost equally, pointed against the Miracles of Christ and his Apostles, and no saving Clauses or Restrictions added; when, instead of appearing concerned to defend Himself from such an Imputation, He calmly replies, Who can help it? It is no Wonder that Any Good Christian, who has any Concern for his Religion, should be alarmed at such an Attempt. Whatever therefore is insinuated, We are not afraid of the Consequences of Truth, nor do We desire to support it by Falshood; but the proper Question in this Case is, What is Truth? Whether it is true that Miracles subsisted in the Ages spoken of: And in such an Enquiry every good Reasoner ought to be afraid of Consequences. If We can prove by just Consequences, that any Position interferes with any known Truth, We thereby prove such Position to be false: If We prove it to interfere with any Principle professed and allowed by an Opponent, We prove against Him, at least so far as to convict Him of Inconsistency.

A

FULL and FINAL

REPLY, &c.

IT is, to me at least, no acceptable Task to continue a Controversy with any, who maintain and enforce the great and fundamental Doctrines and Precepts of Christianity. The *Importance* of those Truths which we agree in, and of those Hopes which we jointly pursue, should unite us closely to each other, and make us desirous to avoid those Petulancies and unkind Reflections, which are apt to arise in the Progress of Disputes of this Nature. Yet since I have accidentally been engaged in this Question, and have seen no Reason to alter my Opinion upon it; since, to speak freely, many Passages in Dr. M's Performance do in my Judgment bear a very *unfriendly* Aspect, and have, however intended, been applied to a very ill Use, (having afforded in-

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deed but too just Occasion for such Application) and since I am by no Means satisfied with the Vindication of his *Defender*, I am induced once more to review this Subject, and to offer my Reasons, why I cannot acquiesce in this Defence.

Mr. *Toll* begins with a Reflection on me for passing over the *Introductory Discourse*, without any Remarks on it, and objects to the Sense of the Word in which I had assigned the Reason of it, *because it had been considered by others*. If I had not meant, that it had in my Judgment been *sufficiently considered*, this could have been no Reason for my passing over it; and therefore since my Meaning was plain, it was scarce worth while to remark on the *Wariness* of the Expression, where He knew no such Wariness was intended. Mr. *T.* indeed ventures to pronounce that the *Introductory Discourse* has not been competently answered, nay, that very little has been produced in Confutation of it; but as This is not the only Point in which We differ in Opinion, I see no Reason to repent of my *Omission*, since it is little likely that what I should have offered on that Head would have been more satisfactory to Mr. *T.* than what I have urged against the *Free Inquiry* itself. And besides that I thought, that it had been the Privilege of every
 Writer,

Writer, to chuse that Part of his Adversary's Performance, which He thought most liable to Exception, without engaging to answer every other Treatise that He may have written in Relation to it ; I still think that in this particular Case it was the most *eligible* Method, both for the Ease of the Reader, and the Abbreviation of the Controversy, (especially after what had been written before) to proceed directly to the Consideration of those *positive Proofs*, on which this new Opinion was to be maintained. The Ingenious Author of the *View of the Controversy*, (whose Performance I have very lately read with Pleasure, tho' I cannot agree with Him in every Part of it) defends the *Introductory Discourse* as being only a *general View of the Question*, and a *Presumption* of the Truth of it, and reminds Us, that Dr. M. Himself has explained the Design of it, as *disposing us previously to suspect* that the Pretence of Miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church was All but a Forgery. Now whilst the *Introductory Discourse* only was published, it was certainly worth while to obviate the Insinuations contained in it, to leave the future Inquiry open, and to guard against Prepossessions, as well on the One Side as on the Other. And This Task was accordingly undertaken and executed at that Time by

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other

other Hands. But when the *Free Inquiry* itself was made Publick, and the positive Arguments, which were to disprove the Pretensions of the Primitive Church to Miraculous Powers, were offered to Examination, I could not think it necessary to re-examine *Presumptions* and *Suspensions*, when the direct Question, and all its Supports, lay now before Us, and remained at that Time unexamined. Had the same Hands undertaken this Part that did the former, Whatever Mr. T. might have ventured to pronounce concerning their Performances, I should probably have acquiesced in them, and have continued as silent on this as on the former Occasion.

From the Censure of this *supposed Omission* Mr. T. proceeds to the Examination of that which I had excepted to in the *Preface*, as well as in the *Free Inquiry* itself. In the State of the Case, Dr. M. had observed, that “ The present Question concerning the
 “ Reality of the Miraculous Powers of the
 “ Primitive Church depends on the joint
 “ Credibility of the Facts pretended to have
 “ been produced by those Powers, and of
 “ the Witnesses who attest them. If either
 “ Part be infirm, their Credit, He says, must
 “ sink in Proportion, and if the Facts especially be incredible, must of Course fall
 “ to the Ground,” for which He adds a
 Reason,

Reason, " because no Force of Testimony
 " can alter the Nature of Things." Now,
 as This Reason seemed to me to be capable
 of more Interpretations than One, I was de-
 sirous to *ascertain* the Meaning of it, that
 We might know, whether it was to be ad-
 mitted or not, or what Force it might have
 in the present Argument; and to this End
 I proposed two Senses in which I thought
 it might be understood. Mr. T. observes
 upon the former of these, that I have
 " substituted other Words, which were none
 " of Dr. M's," which is a Censure that I
 must be content to bear, having not yet
 learned the Art of explaining a *doubtful* Pas-
 sage by only repeating the very Terms of it
 over and over again. But if This be plain-
 ly *one* Sense in which the Words may be
 taken, if it be a *significant* Interpretation of
 this Phrase, that " no Force of Testimony
 " can alter the Nature of Things," to say
 that " it cannot make Falsehood to become
 " Truth;" then I may hope to stand excused
 for proposing a *determinate* Meaning of the
 Sentence, instead of an *ambiguous* one. But
 Mr. T. adds, that This does not express the
 Doctor's Meaning. Why then He is free
 from the Exceptions attending it, and We
 must look out for some other Sense in which
 it is defensible. And this Mr. T. supplies

Us with in the following Line. “ No Force of Testimony, says the Doctor, can alter the “ Nature of Things, that is, can make a “ Thing credible that is in itself incredible.” Now this, as explained by Mr. *T.* appears to me not to be the Doctor’s Meaning, because it seems inconsistent with the first Part of the Sentence, where the Question was said to depend on the *joint Credibility* of the Facts, and of the Witnesses; whereas in this Sense the latter are entirely excluded, and there is no Occasion to enquire into, or Room to admit any Testimony to prove what thro’ its *Incredibility* is supposed incapable of being proved. If by *Incredibility* was here meant *Impossibility*, This might be allowed; but this would fall in with the forementioned Interpretation rejected by Mr. *T.* that “ no Testimony can make Falseness to become “ Truth;” and therefore He softens the Use of the Term, and speaks of these Things as *incredible*, “ because They are Trifling, “ because Ridiculous, because to no Manner of End or Purpose; and several such “ Dr. *M.* has produced,” He says, “ from “ the early Ages upon the Authority of the “ Fathers.” We may observe however, that This is not pretended, or asserted of *all*, or of the *greater Part* of the Miracles of the Earliest Ages, and therefore, upon Supposition

sition of the Truth of it, would upon the Whole be of little Service to his Argument.

But I do not think either Dr. *M*'s Assertion, or Mr. *T*'s Explanation of it in this Sense to be clear of Difficulty, or free from Exception. There is not only great *Inaccuracy* in the Expression in considering any Thing as *incredible*, without Regard to the Sufficiency or Insufficiency of the *Testimony*, but great *Confusion* in the Argument, and some *Danger* in the Consequence. Tho' the Words are varied, yet I suppose that *Trifling* and *Ridiculous*, and *to no End or Purpose*, are all used to express the same Thing, for a real Miracle, in whatever Instance it is exerted, cannot be subject to the two former Charges, any otherwise than as it is liable to the latter. If the *Occasion* be worthy of a Divine Interposition, it is no more *Trifling* or *Ridiculous* to give a Human Voice to a Dumb Creature, than to send an Angelical Messenger from Heaven. The *Purpose* therefore, for which the supposed Miracle is wrought, seems to be the Point to which the *Question* is to be reduced. And in this Sense this Principle, that no Testimony can confirm any Point, which antecedently to the Consideration of that Testimony, appeared to be *Trifling*, or *Ridiculous*, or *to no End and Purpose*, was That which prevented the Reception of

Christianity at the first Publication of it, and has occasioned the Apostacy of Many in later Ages. The Doctrines of the Incarnation, and of the Cross, were *to the Jews a Stumbling Block, and to the Greeks Foolishness*, and therefore They neglected to look into the Evidence, as not allowing that any Testimony could confirm them. In the Judgment of our present Refined Reasoners, They are still esteemed *Trifling and Ridiculous*, and therefore They suppose some Mistake in the Evidence, tho' They know not where to fix it. The Truth is, We are weak, fallible, short-sighted Creatures, and often mistaken in our Apprehensions and Judgments of Things. *The Wisdom of Men is Foolishness with God*, and one End of Miracles was to rouse our *Attention* to Points, which otherwise might be thought not to deserve it, and thereby to open our Eyes to the Intent of Divine Providence, and to shew Us our own *Ignorance and Presumption*. When such a Claim was made and offered fairly to Examination, it was easier, upon Enquiry, to judge of the Reality of it, than to know from previous rational Disquisitions, what Doctrines God must necessarily teach, or on what Occasion He must interpose. If therefore Dr. M. by saying that "no Testimony
" can alter the Nature of Things," did really
mean

mean, that no Testimony could prove the Truth of that which did antecedently appear unlikely and unworthy of the Divine Interposition in the Judgment of Mankind, (for the Case of *Impossibility* is given up) then the Miracles, which He does admit, will refute his Principle, and We shall desire to recall Him to his first State of the Case, to admit the *joint Credibility* of the Facts, and of the Witnesses. Whatever is not *impossible* is capable of being proved. What *appears* to be absurd, may appear to be otherwise upon farther Examination, and often has proved so in the Event. Divine Interpositions are not to be expected in common Cases, nor are Miracles usually offered to prove such Points as are likely to be admitted without them. If the Thing be *improbable*, the Credibility of the Witnesses ought to be the greater, yet it may certainly be established, if the Evidence prove unexceptionable. In this Sense, therefore it is not true, that “no Force of Testimony can make a Thing credible that is in itself incredible;” for this *internal Incredibility* is afterwards explained into the Appearance of *Triflingness*, or *Ridiculousness*, or *Usefulness*; and such *Appearances*, I say, may vanish upon Examination; and That which was highly *improbable* in itself (for This is Mr.

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T's Sense of *Incredibility*) antecedently to give to the View of the Evidence, may upon that View become *morally certain*.

But after all, tho' This be Mr. *T*'s Sense, I do not apprehend it to be Dr. *M*'s Meaning in this Place. He may clear up this Point whenever He pleases, but in the mean Time, as I am willing to suppose Him to be *coherent* and *consistent* in this Paragraph, his Words seem to require a different Interpretation. Such an emphatical Phrase as this, that "no Force of Testimony can alter the Nature of Things," should imply something much more, and much truer, than that Nothing can become credible upon the Proof of Witnesses, which is not credible without it. But He Himself in the following Sentences ascertains, I think, his own Meaning, and explains that *Incredibility*, which no Force of Testimony can alter. He magnifies the Credibility of *Facts* beyond that of *Witnesses*, in that the former, He says, "cannot delude us, cannot speak any other Language, or give any other Information but what flows from *Nature* and Truth." And that We might not misapprehend Him, or be in Doubt *what Facts* He was speaking of, He adds yet more explicitly, "The Testimony therefore of Facts, as it is offered to our Senses in this wonderful Fabrick and

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“ Constitution of Worldly Things, may
 “ properly be called the Testimony of God
 “ Himself, as it carries with it the surest In-
 “ struction in all Cases, and to all Nations,
 “ which in the ordinary Course of his Pro-
 “ vidence He has thought fit to appoint for
 “ the Guidance of Human Life.” This Sen-
 tence Mr. T. confesses to have some *Obscurity*
 in it, and therefore drops it; which is a very
 short Method of *defending* one of the most
 exceptionable Passages in the Performance.
 But pray let it be considered, that it is intro-
 duced as an *Inference* from what went before,
 “ The Testimony *therefore* of Facts, &c.”
 and that these Facts are described to be the
 Effects of Nature, exemplified in the Fabric
 and Constitution of Worldly Things, in Con-
 tradistinction to any supposed Reversal of the
 Course of Nature; and then I should be
 glad to see the Connection and Force of
 this Conclusion, from what He had asserted
 before, if He meant that Nothing that seem-
 ed *Trifling* or *Ridiculous*, or *Useless*, could be
 proved by any Testimony. But if He meant,
 that the Nature of Things, or the established
 Course of it, was stronger than any Testi-
 mony could be of the Reversal of it, then
 the intermediate Sentence, and this conclud-
 ing One, are All *consistent* therewith, and the
Consequence is true and just from the sup-
 posed

posed Truth of the *Premises*. But then it would be easy to point to Passages in several late Advocates for Infidelity, who have asserted the same Thing almost in the same Words; and Nothing can be more obvious, than that such a Principle would support their Cause, and undermine the Belief of all miraculous Interpositions. Such Parallels Mr. T. will say are invidious, for “ He cannot
 “ but think it great Want of Candor to suppose that Dr. M. had any Intention to invalidate the Testimony of the Apostles,
 “ when He has so many Times over, and
 “ in such express Terms admitted miraculous Powers to have been exerted by them.” One should have thought, that I had obviated this Reflection by saying in the very Place referred to, that “ I would not charge
 “ this as the positive *Design* of the Author, since it is inconsistent with his Confessions in other Places;” and therefore I only pointed out the Consequences of his Position, as destructive of his Faith; which Method must charitably suppose Him to be a Believer, by supposing that such a View of the Argument would have its proper Effect on Him. The *Intention* of any Writer any farther than it is openly avowed, or betrayed by unnecessary and strong Indications, is a Point which I have neither Authority, nor
 Incl-

Inclination to judge of, Be that to his own Heart, and to the Searcher of it. But the *Tendency* of any Writing We have more Liberty to judge of, and there can be no readier Way to convince a Religious Person of his Mistake, than by shewing, that it would end in subverting the Principles, which He Himself maintains. Should I be so Unhappy as to drop any thing, which should by Others be esteemed inconsistent with the Evidence, or the Doctrine of Christianity, I should by no Means call it *Want of Candor* to have this Inconsistency pointed out to me, but should think Myself obliged either to disprove the Consequence, or to retract the Principle. Such an Objection supposes the Person, to whom it is objected, to be in earnest in the Profession of his Faith, and owes its whole Force to his *presumed Sincerity*.

However, neither must *Candor* blind our Eyes, nor make Us disregard all *suspicious* Passages, unnecessarily inserted, and frequently repeated, because inconsistent with some other Professions and Declarations. Some Caution must be used against Those, who write under *Disguise*; and tho' I earnestly hope, that Dr. M. is not a Person of this Character, yet in an Age abounding with Writers of this Kind; it is *Want of Prudence*

dence in Him to give such Causes of Suspicion, not *Want of Candor* in Others to point them out. He chooses to distinguish Himself as One “ not so scrupulous with Regard “ to Consequences, as Many of his Profession “ are apt to be,” (Pref. P. 6.) and there is such an inexcusable Levity of Expression, and so professed a Disregard to any Consequences, “ *how far soever they may reach,*” in his After-Reply to the foreseen Objection of this Kind, (P. 192, 193.) as may well put every Man on his Guard, who has the Cause of Christianity at Heart, and considers the *Importance*, as well as the *Evidence* of it. Upon the Whole, I see not the least Reason to recede from the Charge, which I had advanced on this Article. The Sentence referred to is either absolutely *false*, or *foreign* to the Point. When He said, that “ The “ Testimony of Facts, as it is offered to our “ Senses in this wonderful Fabrick and Con- “ stitution of Things, may properly be call- “ ed the Testimony of God Himself, as it “ carries with it the surest Instruction in all “ Cases, and to all Nations,” had He stopped here, or had only added, “ which He “ has thought fit to appoint for the Conduct “ of Human Life,” This had had a due Connection in the Place it stands in, and an immediate Relation to the Argument, as
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amounting to a Denial of any supernatural Interposition. If this Objection be thought to be removed by the Insertion of that Clause, *which God in the ordinary Course of his Providence has thought fit, &c.* then the Sense will be, that the Course of Nature is the surest Instruction, where no surer is offered by extraordinary Interpositions; which is at the best a *low* and *jejune* Truth, does not follow from any Thing which He had advanced before, nor has any Connection with the Argument, by which He was to prepare to disprove the *Credibility* of the Miracles of the Primitive Church.

There is a most unaccountable Confusion in the next Paragraph, and a Veil of Obscurity thrown over a plain Argument, insomuch that a Reader, without an Attentive Review of that Part of the *Free Answer*, to which it seems to be intended as an Objection, would scarce know, What was affirmed, or denied. Dr. M. had asserted, (Pref. P. 16.) that “ if any Credit be due
 “ to the Church Historians in this Case, it
 “ must reach either to all, or none :” The Consequence of which, I added, would be, that if He could disprove any *One* Relation of this Kind, the *Rest* would fall with it. But this I shewed to be unreasonable, because when Miracles were known to be frequent, false
 Preten-

Pretensions to them were of Course likely to be made, and might sometimes possibly be admitted unwarily by Those, who had known many real Instances; so that amongst many true Accounts some false ones might gain Credit, and be recorded with the others. I went on to consider the Reason assigned by Dr. *M.* for giving Credit to all Historians, or none, namely, that “ the Characters of
 “ the Persons attesting, and the Nature of
 “ the Things attested, were of equal Force
 “ in all Ages as in One.” Whether Dr. *M.* by the *Nature of the Things attested*, meant the Whole of the Accounts as every Way circumstantiated, or only as being equally contrary to the Course of Nature, did not appear to me, and therefore I added, that the *Occasion* of a miraculous Interposition was a Circumstance of Importance, which yet certainly was not the same in all Instances. More directly to the Point I observed, that neither were the Characters of the *Persons attesting* absolutely of equal Force. The *Post-Nicene* Fathers were in Point both of *Judgment* and *Integrity* less unexceptionable than their Predecessors. So long a Succession of Miracles might probably incline them more to *Credulity*; and besides, when Christianity was once established by the Civil Power, there were more Temptations, more tempo-
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ral Inducements to encourage a Belief of Miracles, than can be pretended, whilst the Powers of the World were against them. Whilst Persecutions threatened the Church, a Man could have no View in claiming miraculous Powers, but that of promoting disinterestedly the Cause of Truth: He could have no Expectation in this World, but that of bringing down the speedier and heavier Vengeance upon Himself. But when *Honours* and *Profits* attended the Profession of this Religion, the Good, the Bad, and Those of doubtful Characters, not distinguished by Others, and perhaps scarce known to Themselves, promiscuously joined in it: Other Influences, besides the Love of Truth, began to have their Weight. The Zeal of Many became more warm, but less pure, and the Deceitfulness of their Hearts gradually affected their Doctrines. Whilst They were serving so *good a Cause*, They were sometimes less scrupulous about the *Means*, and They had apparently an *Interest* to serve, by this Cause, which their poor persecuted Ancestors had not. These are *abating* Circumstances in the Characters of the After-Writers, and may well make Us more cautious and circumspect in the Examination of their Reports.

But I added, that neither was the *Nature of the Things attested* the same, in the only Sense in which I apprehended it could affect this Argument; the former speaking of a *constant*, a *frequent* Exercise at least of miraculous Powers residing among them; the latter only attesting *particular* Facts, which, if true, were undoubtedly miraculous. This made a great Difference in the Case, and the Consequence of this Difference was still more material, in that the former were of Course more easy to be examined into, and were offered to View at a Time when the Power was on the Enemies Side, and They had all possible Advantages for Examination. What now does Mr. T. reply to these plain and important Distinctions, invalidating Dr. M's Assertion, and shewing that some Credit may be given to *Some* of the Historians asserting miraculous Claims, tho' not equally to *All*, or in all Particulars? Why only, that He wants to know, "which of the
 " Historians He is to give Credit to, and
 " which not; and to distinguish exactly and
 " with Certainty between those true and false
 " Miracles transmitted to Us upon the Credit of the same Historian." By *Exactness* and *Certainty* I suppose He does not mean more than the Nature of the Case will admit of, and then I answer, He must make Use
 of

of his *Reason*, and judge by the same Rules that He would of other Historical Testimony; which will probably enable Him to distinguish betwixt the *true*, and the *false*, or the *mistaken* Witness. But He adds, “ if
 “ Either the true or false Miracles related by
 “ these Historians are to make Part of
 “ his Belief, He must have some sure Rule
 “ and Method of discerning them apart; if
 “ no such Rule or Method be afforded Him,
 “ He must conclude it to be a Matter quite
 “ indifferent, whether He believes any of
 “ them.” One should have thought by this Insinuation (which occurs again in the Performance) that He had been arguing against One, who had made this Point a *necessary Article* of Faith; which is such a Misrepresentation as is not easily to be excused; I have no where given any Ground for any such Charge. I am firmly persuaded, that a Man may be, I have not the least Doubt but that Mr. Toll is, a *sincere and good Christian*, tho’ He does not believe any of the Miracles of the Primitive Church; but I am as fully persuaded that He is *mistaken* in this Point, and that He is unwarily engaged in the Defence of an Author, whose Objections against these Miracles are so pointed, as to be equally subversive of the Belief of all Miracles, and are understood to be so equally

by most of the Friends and Enemies of the Christian Cause. This was the Reason of my interposing in this Dispute, believing the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the Church to be a *real* Truth, tho' not a *fundamental* one; and particularly apprehending Danger from the *Manner* in which Dr. M. has managed the Argument; being likewise more scrupulous with Respect to *Consequences* than the Dr. professes Himself to be. All Truths, as Mr. T. observes afterwards, are I doubt not, coincident with Each Other; and, I may add, do often contribute to the Illustration and Support of Each Other, especially when relating so nearly to the same Subject; and therefore it may not be *quite so indifferent*, whether a Man believe any of these Miracles, tho' it is not required of Him as any *necessary* Article of Faith. But if any One does not discern this Distinction, if He writes like a Christian, expressing a Regard for the *Importance* of the Gospel, not throwing out needless Grounds of Suspicion, or advancing Principles destructive of the Belief of all Miracles, but pointing to the Difference of the Evidence of those wrought in the Time of the Apostles, and those attested in After-Ages, far be it from me to cast any Censure or remote Imputation

tion on such a Writer, however I may differ from Him in Opinion.

Mr. *T.* goes on *enquiring* instead of *answering*. He “ would fain see a clear and convincing Reason assigned, why We are to trust the Writers of the first or second Century, and reject those of the Third, or to admit the Testimony of the Third, and reject that of the Fourth, and so on thro’ Every Age successively down to the present, as it is deduced by the Romish Church.” Why the Writers of the *First* Century were to be credited in Opposition to all Others, Dr. *M.* will teach Him, who insists, that the *Apostles* were the *only* Writers at all in that Century, who made any mention of Miracles; so that this State of the Case in Mr. *T.*’s Inquiry betrays great Want of Caution, and of Attention to the Doctrine of the Gentleman, whose Principles He has been pleased to espouse. The Distinction demanded betwixt the *second* and *third* Century in this Respect is likewise *imaginary*, and seems to imply an entire Unacquaintedness with this Controversy; for I know of None, who have fixed on that Period for the Cessation of Miracles, admitting those of the *second*, and rejecting those of the *third* Century. The Difference between these, and all After-Ages, is very considerable. Several

Reasons may be assigned, and were assigned in several Parts of the *Free Answer*, why our Doubts might well commence from that Time, and why the Testimonies of the former Writers might be trusted, tho' those of the succeeding ones might well be called in Question. Whenever *Worldly Interest* is concerned in the Claim to Miraculous Powers, We may reasonably begin to *suspect* the Truth of them, altho' such *Suspensions* will not overbalance *positive Evidence*, where it is offered to publick Examination amongst those, whose equal Interest it was to disprove it, and in such a Situation stood the Test and was admitted. But when such publick Examination is refused, our *Suspicion* of the *Truth* of such Claim improves into a positive *Assurance* of the *Falsity* of it, and We no longer scruple to pronounce against those Miracles, which We are not permitted to inquire into; since it would have been equally to their Credit and Success to have been offered to the strictest Scrutiny, if their Truth could have supported them under it. By these obvious Distinctions Mr. T's Inquiries may reasonably be answered, and He may be enabled to carry on his Inquiry, without Danger of Mistake in any material Instance, thro' the several Ages of Christianity, down to the present Claims of the Romish Church.

Church. The Testimonies of those Writers *preceding* the Civil Establishment of our Religion, when their Lives and their Salvation depended on the Truth of what They said, and when They challenged their Adversaries to look as narrowly as They pleased into the Foundation of their Pretensions, will be the more firmly established; whilst the modern Pretensions of Papists will in the same View be immediately rejected; and the principal Cases of Difficulty will be in those Claims most nearly succeeding the Conversion of the Princes of the Earth; in which the Case will not be so clear on either Side; but Those, who agree in the main Point of Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Church, may reasonably be supposed to differ in their Judgment of particular Instances.

Why these Distinctions repeatedly urged before, were passed over in Silence, and not shewn to be *erroneous*, or *frivolous*, but are called for again, as if no Notice had been taken of this Part of the Subject, I must leave Mr. T. to account for, and proceed with his Wishes and Inquiries. “ It is to be wished,” he says, “ Mr. D. would lay down “ the Bar at any particular Period of Time, “ and tell Us, Hitherto We are to proceed “ and no farther.” Mr. D. does not take
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upon Him so absolutely to determine a Point, about which much wiser Men have differed: But as far as his Opinion is worth considering, This Question was answered beforehand by an explicit Declaration, that “ it seems
 “ most probable, that this Power gradually
 “ decreased, and that occasional Miracles for
 “ particular Purposes lasted much longer than
 “ what may strictly be called *the Age of Mira-*
 “ *cles*; (P. 8.) that the most general Opinion
 “ is, that they ceased upon the Civil Establishment
 “ of Christianity; (*ibid.*) and that it
 “ was the Credit of Those Assertors alone of
 “ Miraculous Powers, who wrote *before* the
 “ Civil Establishment of Christianity, which
 “ I was concerned to defend.” (P. 136.) May I not reasonably enquire again in my Turn, Why this was not taken Notice of? or ask Any One who had only read Mr. T’s Defence, Whether He could have believed, that I had been thus free and express upon a Point, which this Gentleman’s Wishes must suppose me to have omitted? I had added, that “ the precise Duration of Miracles was
 “ not in itself necessary to the Question before Us, but might be determined differently by Those, who believe the main
 “ Article.” The Reason of this was so plain, that I did not think it necessary to enlarge on it. For if we can prove that the Testimo-

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ny given to some Miraculous Powers after the Days of the Apostles *is sufficient* to confirm the Belief of them, and that the Pretensions of Others in later Times *are not sufficient* to that Purpose, the Question will be sufficiently established against Dr. M. tho' We may not be able to fix in what exact Part of the intermediate Interval, those Miraculous Powers were really withdrawn. Those who are of Opinion, that Miracles ceased *immediately*, when the Rulers of the Earth became Christians; and Those who think They continued for a Century or two longer in the Church, may equally make good their Point against the Author of the *Free Inquiry*, however they may differ in a less material Point among themselves. But Dr. M. it seems, thinks otherwise, and Mr. T. says, " offers several
 " very good Reasons for his Opinion, which
 " Reasons Mr. D. has not attempted to answer." As I was not conscious of any such wilful Omission of this Kind, I re-examined the Passage referred to with some Curiosity, where I found these several very good Reasons shrink into one only, and that founded on a mistaken Supposition of confirming all the Doctrines and Usages of those Ages, in which these miraculous Powers were really continued. This likewise I had taken particular Notice of on another Occasion, where
 it

it was repeated and asserted in a stronger Manner, and had observed, that “ this supposed Connection might be serviceable to the Cause of Popery, but was a Concession in which I thought he would not be joined by any rational Protestant.” (P. 56.) Dr. *M.* insists on it as necessary to fix the precise Point of the Duration of Miraculous Powers, that We may know, “ how far the Hand of God continued to co-operate visibly with the Saints of those Ages, by giving a Divine Sanction to the Doctrines which they taught, and the Rites which they established.” (Pref. P. 16, 17.) And had Those Saints Themselves thus connected their Opinions or Practices with their miraculous Powers, and offered supernatural Evidence to confirm any new particular Doctrines or Rites, then the D’s Arguments would have been somewhat to the Purpose ; tho’ not quite conclusive, unless they had likewise represented those Doctrines and Rites as necessary to Salvation. But if they only pleaded their miraculous Powers in Confirmation of the Truth of the Gospel ; if they did not pretend, by Virtue of this Privilege, to be infallible or impeccable, then their Doctrines and Usages will still be liable to the Test of Reason and Revelation, and there will be no Necessity of ascertaining the precise Period of all the true Miracles, in
order

order to discern those Truths which God has stamped with his Authority. Those Writers will still, especially when They are *unanimous*, be the best Witnesses what were the Doctrines and Discipline of the early Ages, (which is surely a Point deserving of Consideration) and their Testimony will be of Weight, whilst it is found *consistent* with Scripture, tho' it would be of no Force *against* the plain Sense of it. Miraculous Powers, as I observed before on this Subject, did not preserve all Those who were endowed with them from *immoral* Practices, yet neither did They justify or extenuate them; but our Saviour speaks of such Persons as finally condemned, *Matt. vii. 23*, and should inexcusable *Superstitions* as well as *Immoralities* be found in any such Persons, the Answer and the Event would be the same; for those very Miracles, which enabled them to prove the Truth of their Religion, did thereby aggravate their Guilt in any *unsuitable* Practices. The Case in which Dr. M. elsewhere chose to illustrate the Force of this Argument of a supposed Connection betwixt their Miracles and their Doctrines or Rites, was that of the Veneration of Reliques. “ It is to those antient Tales” He says, “ so gravely attested, of Miracles wrought by the Bones of Saints and Martyrs, that the Church of *Rome* owes all that

“ Trade

“ Trade, which she still draws from the same
 “ Fund and Treasure of her Wonder-working
 “ Reliques: And if We can believe such
 “ Stories, as they are delivered to Us by the
 “ Primitive Writers, We cannot condemn
 “ a Practice which is evidently grounded
 “ upon them.” (P. 25.) Now in the First
 Place, the very earliest Mention of Miracles,
 wrought by the Bones of Saints and Martyrs,
 is of so late a Date, as will no way affect the
 Question as maintained by the Defenders of
 the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the
 Church till the Establishment of it by Civil
 Authority; and therefore if his *supposed* Con-
 nection was never so *real*, this Instance
 could be of no Service to Him against the
 greater Part of his Opposers.

But let us farther examine the Strength of
 the Connection itself. Dr. M. says, “ If We
 “ can believe such Stories, as they are de-
 “ livered to Us by the Primitive Writers, We
 “ cannot condemn a Practice, which is evi-
 “ dently grounded upon them.” That is, If
 We can credit those antient Tales, as He
 calls them, so gravely attested, of Miracles
 wrought by the Bones of Saints and Martyrs,
 We cannot blame the Church of *Rome* for
 the *superstitious* Adoration of those Reliques,
 this Practice being evidently grounded on that
 Belief. But scarce any other Protestant I sup-
 pose

pose will join with Him in this, or think that the Church of *Rome* is not now to blame for the Worship of those old rotten Bones, as Dr. *M.* expresses it, tho' those Bones were supposed to be heretofore the Instruments of working miraculous Cures. This was advancing a Step farther than he had done in the *Introductory Discourse*, or at least farther than his able Advocate, the Author of the *View of the Controversy*, chose to understand or to defend Him. When several Writers had shewn the Unreasonableness of inferring the *Worship* of Reliques from the Cures attributed to them, This Gentleman endeavours to shew that They misunderstood or misrepresented Dr. *M.* “ The Thing
 “ says He, to be attended to at present, is not,
 “ whether Miracles wrought in any Age, are
 “ Confirmations of the concurrent Usages or
 “ Practices of that Age, nor whether the
 “ Obligation to the Adoration of Reliques,
 “ will follow from Miracles being wrought
 “ by such Reliques. But whether Miracles
 “ wrought in any Age, through, or by
 “ Means of any Rite, upon Application to
 “ God thro' that Rite; whether Miracles so
 “ wrought are not to be considered as Confir-
 “ mations of the Divine Approbation of the
 “ Innocence or Lawfulness of such Rite of
 “ Application.” (P. 11.) Again, “ To in-
 “ fer the Worship of Reliques, in the high
 “ Sense

“ Sense of Worship, merely from Miracles
 “ being wrought by them, is an Inference
 “ too large; But we may infer the Lawfulness and Innocence of that Rite so far as it goes; which is all the Inference contended for (P. 15, 16.). This is repeated again and again, (P. 18, 34, 40, 43, 141.) as several Gentlemen had considered the Argument in the same Light. But now this Distinction and this Plea are waved by Dr. *M.* who here roundly asserts, that He was supposed to mean before, that if We can believe those ancient Tales of Miracles wrought by the Bones of Saints and Martyrs, We cannot condemn the present Practice of the Church of *Rome*, which is evidently (evidently He must mean in *Reason*, not in *Fact* only, otherwise We might condemn it) grounded upon them.

Now the Grounds on which We think that tho’ We should admit those ancient Tales, yet We may condemn the present Practice of the Church of *Rome*, that is as Dr. *M.* explains it, “ The Trade which She still
 “ draws from the same Fund and Treasure
 “ of her Wonder-working Reliques,” are plainly these, that if ever Miracles were worked by such Reliques, yet they have long since ceased; and that even if they had continued, yet they would not have justified the superstitious and idolatrous Regard now paid by the
 Church

Church of *Rome* to the Reliques themselves. The Author of *the View* thus limits his Assertion, that “ Miracles wrought in any Age, through or by Means of any Rite, upon Application to God thro’ that Rite, are to be considered as Confirmations of the Divine Approbation of the Innocence or Lawfulness of such Rite of Application, provided always that no Mark or Intimation of the Disapprobation of the Rite be, or hath been given (P. 11.). This is certainly a very just Distinction, and therefore a Disapprobation having been expressed in clear Terms, of all *Creature-Worship*, the Practice of the *Romish* Church must be condemned, even tho’ They had still miraculous Powers residing among them to be wrought by Means of such Reliques. This Argument therefore is of Weight against Dr. *M*’s unlimited Assertion, tho’ not against his more wary Advocate; who elsewhere adds, that “ to say that They cannot defend by these Means, the Worship of Reliques, in the high Sense of Worship, (a Practice They disclaim) is saying Nothing, if We leave them in Possession of a Proof of that superstitious Veneration and Mediatorial Application, the Practice of which They acknowledge and contend for, and which are Rites sufficiently unlawful.” (P. 19.) As to their Disclaiming the high Sense

Sense of Worship, They do indeed disclaim it just as the *Wiser Heathens* did, by Evasions and Distinctions which They learned from them, and which would be of equal Force to acquit the former as the latter from the Charge of Idolatry; for No One who has been amongst them, can I think be insensible, that They do as really and truly worship their Reliques and Images as their *Pagan* Ancestors did. As to *Superstitious Veneration*, and *Mediatorial Application*, which are pronounced to be Rites sufficiently unlawful; these are Words of more doubtful Signification, and should be more clearly ascertained, that Those, who agree in Opinion, may not dispute about Expressions. I have no other or clearer Notion of *Superstition*, than that it is *Misplacing* our Devotion on *wrong* Objects without Authority, or *over-valuing* Right, but *less important* Practices, farther than Reason or Revelation will warrant. Whatever goes *against* express Direction is *irreligious*, and deserves a worse Name than *Superstition*. *Veneration* is a more uncertain Term, and may mean a Respect greater or less, faulty or innocent, just according to the other Words to which it is joined, or the Methods in which it is expressed. This Gentleman I observe once uses it to mean no more than the Application of the Relique for the
supposed

supposed Cure to be wrought by it, which he calls “ the Rite of touching or venerating “ dead Mens Bones;” (P. 16.) *Mediatorial Application* sounds high, and might seem to imply a forbidden Practice, but, as elsewhere explained by this Gentleman, it means no more than *the Method of applying* to God for a Cure by the *Use* of such an Instrument, as a supernatural Power is supposed to be annexed to. Now This Gentleman, says, and I think says rightly, that from the supposed Reality of the Miracle We may infer the Lawfulness and Innocence of the Rite so far as it goes, and therefore say I, in such supposed Case, it would not be any *superstitious Veneration*, that is not any *groundless Respect* without Authority, nor any *faulty Mediatorial Application* to make Use of such an Instrument to our own Benefit, to which Providence had so visibly annexed so supernatural a Power. But this, says this Author “ appears to Him to be a direct “ Concession in Support of the like superstitious Rites used in the Church of *Rome*.” (P. 44.) It appears to me to be directly otherwise, because whether Miracles were wrought or not by these Means in the *early Ages*, We are satisfied that they are *not* wrought *so now*; and therefore these Rites and Applications are not established now by the same Authority that they are supposed to be then.

The Whole of this Veneration and Application depends on the Evidence of the *Reality* of the Miracle; It is *Superstition* to apply to such a Method of Cure *without* express Warrant, but *with* it, certified by such supernatural Interposition, such Application would be sufficiently justifiable. And what Advantage can *Popery* gain by this Concession? It will rest on them to prove the *Certainty* of those pretended Miracles wrought by Reliques; and could they prove that Point, all that would be allowed in Consequence would be the *Lawfulness* of using and applying them, and such a Veneration, Regard, and Esteem for them as is answerable to the Value that We put on any other *instrumental* Causes of important Blessings. But since the First Point is the *Proof* of the *Reality* of the Miracles, here We may securely rest, and may challenge them to exhibit them to publick Examination; after which this Gentleman will agree with me, that the very Occasion of the Dispute will be cut off concerning the Degree of the Regard due to Reliques, on the Supposition of miraculous Cures being wrought by them.

He presents Us however with a parallel Instance, (P. 13,) which I chuse to consider as Instances do usually best illustrate such Arguments, and because the very same has
been

been introduced by Others on this Subject. It relates to the *Royal Touch* for the Cure of the King's Evil. For my own Part, I am ready to own that I have no Faith in this as a supernatural Endowment for this plain Reason amongst others, that if some Cures have indeed been wrought by it, yet in other Cases it has most certainly proved ineffectual : Now the *Success* in *some* Instances may be accounted for without a Supernatural Interposition ; the *Failure* in *Any* cannot I think be accounted for upon that Supposition.---But admitting the Facts, He asks, Does God approve of this Rite as lawful, or does He not? He has a Reply ready for the Determination on either Side ; but I find no Difficulty in answering directly, that on Supposition of the Fact of a supernatural Virtue annexed to this Touch, God Almighty does certainly approve of this Rite as *lawful*, Nor do I foresee any Inconvenience in the only Principle, on which He says this can be defended, namely

“ by alledging the Cures supposed to be given in Evidence of the Divine Approbation of this Rite, no Mark of Disapprobation appearing.” But, He says, that “ this Practice seems to carry rather more Superstition in it than touching the Reliques of a Saint or a Martyr, (for Kings are not always either the One or the Other)” I answer

that according to my Notion of *Superstition*, which is ascribing more Virtue or Merit to any Thing than Reason or Revelation will warrant, there could be no *Superstition* at all in applying to the *Royal Touch* for a Cure, if it were unquestionable that Providence did thereby grant miraculous Cures; since such continued Miracles would be Warrant sufficient for such Application; for God Almighty certainly would not offer Us supernatural Blessings in a Way in which it would be Unlawful for Us to accept them. I see not the Appearance of any Doubt about the *Lawfulness* of this Rite, if it were thus visibly distinguished by such important Effects; for surely there is no Prohibition against embracing miraculous Cures from any Persons, who may be commissioned to administer them; much less can I see how there should be *more* Superstition in this Practice than in touching the Reliques of a Saint or Martyr; since the humblest Expressions of *Civil Homage* to a *Living Prince*, would be less liable to be interpreted into *Idolatrous Devotion* than the Respect and Veneration shewn to *Dead Mens Bones*. The Point of *Sainthood* is out of the Question in this Case, since We ought not to worship Any of what Characters soever; and besides We may be mistaken in *Dead* as well as *Living Saints*, or at least in
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the Reliques belonging to them. I cannot see therefore what Advantage *Popery* could make of this Concession, or how the *Veneration*, that is the *Use* of Rites, to which miraculous Powers were annexed, could be proved to be unlawful, on Supposition of the clear Evidence of the Fact. In the forementioned Instance I should not *worship* either the *King*, or his *Hand*, if I applied to his *Touch* for the Cure of my Distemper, nor would it be a *superstitious Veneration* to respect a Person endowed with such a Virtue, as an extraordinary Instrument of Providence for the Benefit of his Fellow-Creatures.

There is an incautious Phrase used at first by Dr. M. and repeated by the *Author of the View*, which seems to have given Rise to all the Difficulty that has been started on this Point. “ If,” says the Dr. “ We admit the “ Miracles, We must necessarily admit the “ Rites, for the Sake of which they were “ wrought.” (P. 66. *Introd. Disc.*) Now I know no reasonable Sense in which it can be said that the Miracles were wrought *for the Sake* of the Rites. On Supposition again of the Fact, the Assistance was given *for the Sake of Mankind*; It was given in this extraordinary Manner *for the Sake of God's Glory*, to confirm the Truth of a Revelation which He had graciously vouchsafed to the World. The

Manner in which, and the *Instrumentality* by which such Miracles were wrought, were equally easy and indifferent to the Almighty Worker of them, who could with equal Facility work them instantaneously, without any intermediate Causes; but certainly the *End* cannot in any Sense be said to be wrought for the *Sake of the Means*. If indeed there had been an exprefs declared Connection, that Miracles should be wrought by such Reliques, to prove that *Adoration* or *Veneration* was to be paid to them, then they might have been said to have been wrought *for their Sakes*, for in this Case the Miracles would have been the *Means*, and the Worship of Reliques the *End*; but no such Connection is pretended; and the bare Allowance of the *Lawfulness* of a Rite nowhere prohibited, whilst miraculous Powers can be proved to be annexed to it, is a Concession from which I am not in the least apprehensive of any ill Consequence. Could undoubted Proof be given of the Working of Miracles by *Reliques*, I should be so far from thinking it to be *for their Sake*, that I should rather suppose that such *contemptible* Instruments were made Use of to prevent the Danger of any Abuse of them, and to yield the clearer Proof of a *miraculous Interposition*, when such *unlikely* Means were employed to illustrate

illustrate the Divine Power, which must be known to have no Virtue in Themselves.

Upon the whole, whether the Miracles said to be wrought at the Tombs and by the Reliques of Martyrs deserve Credit, is a Question which does not concern those who are defending the Miracles of the three first Centuries; but it concerns the Argument, as Dr. *M.* has managed it, to observe, that supposing those Miracles to have been really wrought, This could no Way justify the Worship of those Martyrs, or their Reliques, any more than the Cures wrought by *St. Paul's Handkerchief* could be a Reason for worshipping either *St. Paul*, or his *Handkerchief*. Those, therefore, who admit the Truth of those Miracles, may notwithstanding very consistently condemn the superstitious Practices of the Church of *Rome*, and reject her pretended Miracles; it being no Objection against the Reality of those early Miracles, that Weak or Wicked Men took Occasion from thence to introduce Superstition and Idolatry, or to invent forged Miracles. I have been led into these Reflections from Mr. *Toll's* Charge of a former Omission, not from any officious Desire of opposing the *Author of the View*, &c. whom it would be more Pleasure to me to concur with in Opinion. But I do not see the Force of Dr. *M's* Argument for fixing the

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precise

precise Period of miraculous Powers; in order to confirm the Doctrines or Usages of the several Ages, which must be judged of by other Rules, and must stand or fall by the Test of *Scripture* or *Reason*. In the Instance assigned with Respect to *Reliques*, the Worship or undue Veneration of them, as *Objects of Devotion*, was at all Times unlawful; and the Use and Application of them as *Means of Cure*, were so far innocent and allowable as, and no farther than miraculous Powers could be proved to be worked by them, whatever that precise Period may be supposed to be.

Mr. T. chuses to pass over the Objections to the remaining Parts of Dr. M's Preface, "because every Thing material," He says, "will occasionally fall in the Course of his Remarks." (P. 9.) I cannot help thinking that it would have been material to have vindicated some other obnoxious Passages which I had pointed to, and where the poor Plea of *Obscurity* will not satisfy; where his Arguments mean Nothing, or worse than Nothing; and where the Belief of Miracles is represented as a *Desertion of the Path of Nature* and *Experience*, and a Contradiction to that "Revelation which the Creator made of Himself from the Beginning placed continually before our Eyes in the wonderful

“ derful Works and beautiful Fabric of this
 “ visible World.” However somewhat is
 here added, which I shall not pass over. I
 was arguing from Dr. M’s own Conces-
 sions; and in particular from his Account
 of the Design of Miracles, that “ they were
 “ given to enable the first Preachers more
 “ easily to over-rule the inveterate Prejudices
 “ both of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and to
 “ bear up against the discouraging Shocks
 “ of popular Rage and Persecution,” Mr.
 T. replies, “ Dr. M. does not allow, nor do
 “ I think that the rooting out inveterate Pre-
 “ judices, without Restriction and Limita-
 “ tion to Times and Circumstances, is a suf-
 “ ficient Occasion for them” (P. 10.). But
 the very Point which I had in View was to
 shew, that the Restrictions and Limitations
 expressed by Dr. M. were of no Advantage
 to his Argument, as not *confining* the Occa-
 sion for Miracles to the *Apostolical Age*, since
 according to Dr. M’s own Words “ Chris-
 “ tianity had not at that Time gained an
 “ Establishment in every Quarter of the
 “ known World”; and in particular I ob-
 served, that the *severest* Persecutions were af-
 ter the Days of the Apostles, so that in this
 Respect Miracles might even seem *more ne-
 cessary* in the succeeding Ages, till the Civil
 Establishment of this Religion. To this His
Defender

Defender answers Nothing, but goes on to repeat an Objection which I had expressly obviated without vouchsafing to take any Notice that it had been answered beforehand. He says, that “ on the Supposition that the
 “ rooting out of inveterate Prejudices were
 “ a sufficient Occasion for them, We are
 “ absolutely sure, that the Reason of Miracles, *nor* (I suppose He meant *and*) consequently Miracles themselves, can never
 “ cease as long as the World lasts.” (*ibid.*) I had particularly shewn, that this Way of Reasoning would not hold, for that We enjoy several Advantages at this Day for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Heathens, which were wanting at the first Publication of it, and that therefore We stood less in Need of supernatural Assistance for that Purpose. This Gentleman does not so much as attempt to invalidate these Distinctions, but only says, that “ whatever We
 “ may in Speculation fancy possible to be
 “ done by the Force of Human Means, is
 “ found in Fact and Experience to be totally
 “ ineffectual” (P. 11.). Here again I must take the Liberty to dissent from Him. All possible Human Means have not been tried to propagate Christianity, and therefore We cannot pronounce upon the *Fact*, that they are found to be totally ineffectual. Were
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Men half as much in earnest about the *religious*, as They are about the *political* State of the World; were They as solicitous to extend the Knowledge and Practice of *Christian Duties*, as They are to promote *Trade and Commerce*, much might probably be done this Way. The Success of the Endeavours of the *Society for propagating the Gospel* has shewn, that the Truths of the Gospel, when fairly proposed, without Disguise or Addition, have been often able to make their Way into prejudiced Minds; and were those charitable Endeavours universal, the happy Effect might reasonably be hoped to be more general also. The present Darkness and Ignorance of so great a Part of Mankind is owing very much to the *Neglect* of Human Means, and were there all proper Charity, Zeal and Diligence used in this Behalf, there would be much less Occasion for miraculous Assistance than at present there may appear to be. Mr. T. adds, that “there does not seem at present any Likelihood that the Conversion of all Those, who reject Christianity, should be brought about by any Thing less than miraculous Power.” Nor do I think it probable, that the Conversion of *all* would be brought about by that. There were Those who rejected the Evidence of Miracles in our Saviour’s

viour's Time; and I make no doubt but that the same Dispositions would contrive to evade the same Evidence, if it was now offered. But the Question is, Whether there are not *more probable* Hopes of Success, more Advantages on the Side of the Missionaries, and fewer or less Impediments on the Part of the Hearers, in the present State of the World, than at any Time of the first Publication of Christianity, before it was received and established in any Country? The Criminal Indolence and Indifference of Christian Nations, more ready to contend about secular Interests than to agree in promoting their Common Faith, will not suffer Us to judge by *Fact* what can be done towards the Conversion of Unbelieving Nations by all possible Human Means; but We can only judge by *Reason*, whether there are not more probable Grounds to hope for Success without the Aid of Miracles *now*, than *before* any Establishment of Christianity. Here the Distinctions before offered come in full to the Point, but as they remain unconsidered by the *Defender*, they need not be repeated or reinforced. He adds however, instead of a Confutation of my Reasons, or a Proposal of any contrary ones, his own Opinion as a positive Argument. "So that no Argument *a Priori* can I think be drawn for the Necessity

" necessity of Miracles in the second and third
 " Centuries, with Respect to *Unbelievers*,
 " but what is as Good and in as full Force
 " *Now* as it was *Then*" (*ibid.*). If any At-
 tempt of a Proof of this had been offered in
 Opposition to what I had before observed,
 I should have taken it into Consideration;
 but shall now leave Mr. T. to enjoy his
 own Thought, and shall only add, that my
 Arguments were founded on that Observa-
 tion of Dr. M. which I take to be the best
 in his whole Performance; that " it is rash
 " and presumptuous to decide upon the
 " Views and Motives of the Deity by the
 " narrow Conceptions of Human Reason."
 I have no Notion of putting *Ourselves* in
 the Place of our *Maker*, and determining
 what He *must* do upon any Exigency. An
 Argument *à Priori* for the *Necessity* of Mira-
 cles was particularly guarded against by an
 express Declaration, that " We cannot in-
 " deed determine antecedently concerning
 " the *Necessity* of Miracles in such and such
 " particular Cases, but We may subsequent-
 " ly offer such Arguments for the *Propriety*
 " of a *Divine Interposition*, where there is
 " due Evidence for it;" (See *Free Answer*,
 P. 12.) and therefore why Mr. T. chose to
 express Himself again in this Manner, I do
 not know.

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The whole of the State of this Case is this, Dr. M. allows that Miracles were wrought by our Saviour, and his Apostles, and some of the first Christians in the Apostolical Age; He allows that they were wrought to enable the First Preachers to root out Préjudices, and bear up against Persecutions; and He acknowledges it farther as a *Postulatum*, which all will grant, that these miraculous Powers lasted as long as they were necessary to the Church. “ But when the first and principal “ Difficulties were conquered—when Churches “ were planted in all the chief Cities of the “ *Roman* Empire, it may reasonably be pre- “ sumed, that as the Benefit of miraculous “ Powers began to be less and less wanted in “ Proportion to the Increase of those Churches, “ so the Use and Exercise of them began “ gradually to decline; and as soon as Christia- “ nity had gained an Establishment in every “ Quarter of the known World, that they “ were finally withdrawn; and all this He “ thinks may probably be thought to have “ happened whilst some of the Apostles were “ still Living.” (Pref. P. 28, 29.) It seemed proper therefore to observe, that this was a Mistake in *Fact*, that this Occasion for miraculous Powers was not *peculiar* to the *Apostolical Age*, that there was no such Distinction in Favour of that particular Period to which he
has

has confined them, nor any Presumption against the Continuance of Miracles in succeeding Ages, if there should appear to be other Evidence of such Continuance of them; but that this Distinction does very remarkably and forcibly return from the Time of the Civil Establishment: after which it seemed reasonable to be less in Expectation of *Miracles*, when *Human Means* grew more powerful and sufficient.

Mr. T. adds, “ as to the Use of Miracles
 “ for the Support and Encouragement of *Be-*
 “ *lievers*, if their Trials were greater in
 “ those Days of Persecution, their Supports
 “ were so too. They lived so near the
 “ Fountain-Head of *Miracles*, that some of
 “ them no Question had Themselves been Eye-
 “ Witnesses of several wonderful Works, many
 “ more had conversed with those who had been
 “ Eye-Witnesses of them, by which We may
 “ suppose so strong a Conviction to be wrought
 “ in their Hearts of the Divine Original of the
 “ Religion they professed, as, together with
 “ the extraordinary Aids of God’s Holy Spi-
 “ rit, might enable them to undergo the
 “ most severe Punishments that could be in-
 “ flicted upon them with Steadiness and Re-
 “ solution.” (P. 11, 12.) Whatever Force
 there may be thought to be in this Observati-
 on, it cannot affect the chief Part of the
 Time

Time preceding the Civil Establishment of Religion. Thro' more than half the Second Century, and all the Third, there could be None who had seen, or conversed with those who had seen any Miracle wrought, if they were really confined to the Apostolical Age. But Mr. T. adds farther, that some Persons have in all Ages endured Martyrdom as courageously as the Primitive Sufferers could do: " Which known and incontestable Facts, He
 " says, seem entirely to destroy the Argument
 " for the Necessity of Miracles with Regard
 " to Believers." This Observation again is just of as much Force against his Friend Dr. M's Opinion, as against his Opposers; for if Men have in all Ages been enabled to endure the severest Persecutions even to the most cruel Deaths, without miraculous Assistance, why was it necessary that any Miracles should be wrought for their Support at *any Time*, and especially in the *Apostolical Age*, when according to Mr. T's preceding Observation, they had such an Opportunity of seeing other Miracles, as might be supposed to work such a strong Conviction in their Hearts, as together with the extraordinary Aids of God's Holy Spirit, might be sufficient to support them? Yet the Dr. assigns this as one Reason for the granting of miraculous Powers in the Apostolical Age, " to enable the first
 " Preachers

“ Preachers to bear up against the discouraging
 “ Shocks of popular Rage and Persecution,
 “ which they were taught to expect in this
 “ Noviciate of their Ministry.” (Pref. 28.)
Conviction was by no Means the only Point necessary to this Purpose. Those who as firmly *believed* the Truth of the Gospel, as Others who *resisted unto Blood, striving for it*, did yet sometimes fall away in the Day of Persecution. Their *Fears* got the better of their *Reason*; They retained their Faith tho’ they lost their Virtue, and were *self-condemn’d* in their Want of Resolution. In such an Exigency an immediate Miracle might apparently be of great Service, not to *convince* them of what they firmly *believed* before, but to *remind* them of the *Importance* of that Faith, to quicken their Thoughts and Affections, and to open Heaven to their View, when the Terrors of the Earth were likely to engross their Attention, and overset their better Designs. Why God Almighty granted this Privilege to *some Persons*, and not to *others*, why at *some Times*, and not at *others*, We are not qualified to determine. He sees the *Hearts* of all his Servants, and knows the *Whole* of their Difficulties and Advantages, and therefore is alone able to judge when such external Interpositions are useful and seasonable. It may be proper however to observe, that his *supernatural*
E Assistance

Assistance of his faithful Disciples may be as *real* and *effectual*, whether it be thus *externally* testified or not ; which is what I suppose Mr. T. himself allows and intimates, when he speaks of Conviction, “ together with the extraordinary Aids of God’s Holy Spirit,” as sufficient to support the Martyrs. God Almighty may, by an *extraordinary Act of his Holy Spirit*, impress at once as strong and warm a Sense of Heavenly Promises and Comforts on the Mind of the Sufferer, as such an *outward Miracle*, if really wrought, would Occasion ; and in such Case the *Assistance* and *Event* would be the same, as if He had openly wrought such a Miracle in their Favour. Why his infinite Wisdom chuses sometimes to interpose thus publicly and outwardly, sometimes inwardly and secretly in Behalf of his Servants, is best known to his own Counsels ; but in such supposed Cases it is plain that the Martyrs may be *equally* dealt with, whilst to Spectators They are very *unequally* treated ; and We with equal Ignorance and Presumption are examining and wondering, why Miracles should be wrought in Favour of Some, and not of Others. This Difference of Dispositions is probably ordered so as may best answer the farther Designs of Providence ; and the external Manifestation at any Time of supernatural Assistance, may be intended as
well

well for the *Instruction* of Others, as the *Support* of the Sufferers. What I would upon the Whole observe from hence is, that as We cannot argue antecedently in this Case, any more than in the former, *for the Necessity* of Miracles to support Believers under Persecution, so neither can We determine *against the Expediency* of them to this Purpose; nor is this Consideration, that Some have endured Martyrdom *without* the Assistance of Miracles, any Manner of Prejudice to the Evidence that may be offered, that Others in particular Instances *have been favoured* with them.

We are now come to the Re-examination of the Free-Inquiry. Dr. M's First Observation was, that " in all the several Pieces of the " Apostolical Fathers there is not the least " Claim or Pretension to any of these extraordinary Gifts," to which I replied in the first Place, that " the Plain Reason " why the Apostolical Fathers did not enlarge on this Subject was, because They " were not writing to *Heathens* who needed *Conversion*, but to their own *Disciples* " who needed *Instruction* or *Admonition*, so " that if there be in their Epistles any *incidental* Mention of such supernatural Endowments, it is as much as can reasonably be expected, and more than could " necessarily be demanded." Mr. T. with-

out the least Attempt of shewing that this Distinction was frivolous, and that the Mention of Miraculous Evidence was as proper and necessary to be repeatedly made to those who believed it already, as to those who opposed it; runs off to Generals, and observes (P. 14, &c.) that it is hard to conceive, that if Miracles continued, all the Writers for so long a Space of Time could avoid taking some particular Notice of them; that in the Acts of the Apostles they are circumstantially specified;---that it is to be presumed, that if God Almighty thought fit to continue a Power of working Miracles in his Church, that he would take Care to have some Testimony of the Exercise of this Power authentically recorded---that it is highly probable that He must intend such mighty Works as an Object of Belief to Those that come after, and that this implies something of an infallible Direction to the Persons who are to record them.--- “ But this,” says He, “ is by no Body contended for in the “ present Case.” I think so too, and therefore do not see the Force or Use of this Method of Reasoning. Mr. T. adds, that “ He “ does not (and I am glad that He does not) “ lay down this Method of Reasoning as “ an absolute and demonstrative Proof, that “ there were no such Powers existing; but “ this

“ this He will venture positively to infer
 “ from it, that 'tis of no Manner of Confe-
 “ quence to Us whether there were or no.”
 The Difference between making this Belief
 a *necessary Article* of Faith, and representing
 it as of no *Manner of Consequence* at all, is a
 Point that has been spoken to already, and
 need not be repeated as often as these Infi-
 nuations occur.

Mr. T. then proceeds triumphantly, repeat-
 ing my Words, “ Is then an incidental
 “ mention of these Powers as much as can
 “ be expected, and more than can be de-
 “ manded?” He goes on, “ According to
 “ this latter Assertion, We had had Reason
 “ to believe them, if no Mention at all had
 “ been made of them. This is carrying the
 “ Matter a great Way indeed, &c.” What
 perplexed the Thoughts of this Gentleman,
 or what strange Connection He had formed
 in his own Mind, when He wrote these Sen-
 tences, I cannot pretend to say, or even to
 guess: But how he could infer from my say-
 ing, that in Practical Exhortations addressed
 to professed Believers to awaken them to a
 suitable Life, it was as much as could reasona-
 bly be expected, and more than could neces-
 sarily be demanded, that there should be an
incidental Mention of Miracles, that therefore
 We should have had Reason to believe

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them,

them, if no Mention at all had been made of them, I cannot in the least conjecture. The Grounds, on which We believe these Miracles, is the Testimony of Those who had Occasion to take Notice of the *Evidences* of Christianity, but this was not the Point in View when They wrote to Disciples who already admitted all that could be said on that Head, and needed *Admonitions* only to stir them up to a Holy Practice. With them, not the *Evidence*, but the *Nature* and *Importance* of their Religion, were the proper Subjects of Discourse, and are accordingly chiefly treated of by the Apostolical Writers. Had Those who first wrote professedly to establish the *Truth* of this Religion, been *Silent* on this Article, This would have been a considerable Prejudice against the Testimony of later Writers, with Respect to Miracles; but it is no such Exception that *Those* did not more expressly mention them, whose Subject did not lead them to this Point, and who had no Occasion to be continually telling Believers what They all knew already, and who were more likely to fail in *Practice* than in *Faith*. In the earliest Apologies that are still extant, there is an express Claim to miraculous Powers, and We have some Testimony concerning the Testimony in this Respect, of those which are lost,
which

which is all that can be expected in this Case. *Eusebius*, who had read them, assures Us on their Authority, that the Successors of the Apostles did work Miracles. ἐπεὶ καὶ τῷ θείῳ πνεύματι ἐσέτι τότε δι' αὐτῶν πλείται παράδοξοι δυνάμεις ἐνήργουν· ὥς τε ἀπὸ πρώτης ἀκροάσεως, ἀθρόως αὐτανδρα πλήθη προθύμως τὴν εἰς τὸν τῶν ἁλῶν δημιουργὸν εὐτέλειαν αὐταῖς ψυχαῖς καταδέχεσθαι. *Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. 3. c. 37.* Since therefore They who wrote on Purpose to convert Gainfayers, and to disarm Persecutors, did challenge this Power, when it must have been fatal to them to have made a false Claim, What can be inferred from the *supposed Silence* of those, who were writing *practical* Advices and Admonitions to *Believers*, to persuade them to *live as becometh the Gospel of Christ*? All that I can infer from it is, that the primitive Writers knew and considered well what they were about, addressed themselves very properly to the different Persons whom They had Occasion to apply to, and mentioned these *miraculous Gifts* there, and there only, where they were of Use for the Conviction of Those who might be supposed to doubt of them.

Let it be considered a little, how this Case would have stood, and in what Manner the Objections would have been formed, if these

first *Epistolary Writers* had mentioned the Power of working Miracles amongst their own Disciples, and the ensuing Apologists had taken no Notice of them in their Contests with Unbelievers and Gainsayers. Would not their Claim have been paralleled, (and with great Appearance of Reason) with that of the present *Romish Church*, which talks loudly of Miracles amongst her own People, but does not vouchsafe to offer them to the Examination, and for the Conversion of reputed Hereticks? Whereas the Primitive Writers on the contrary addressed themselves very properly to all Men according to their own Principles, proposing directly the best Means of Conviction in the Examination of *Miraculous Powers* to their *Enemies*, who needed such Conviction, but passing them over *in Silence*, or but *incidentally* mentioning them to their *Friends*, who they knew agreed with them in this Point. And can it be thought an *Argument*; can it be thought a *Presumption* against the positive Testimony of the professed Defenders of the Faith, that the Epistolary Writers in behalf of a suitable Holiness of Conversation, did not leave their Subject, and go out of their Way, to repeat the Evidence over and over again, by which these Converts were at first brought over to the Acknowledgment of the Faith?

It

It has been very pertinently observed by the Gentlemen who have wrote before on this Point, that there is no Mention of these miraculous Gifts in any of the Epistles except those of *St. Paul*, and in several of his they are passed over in Silence; and whatever Causes may be assigned for this Omission, will be equally applicable to the Writings of *St. Clement*, *St. Polycarp*, and the Others. It will plainly follow from hence, that no Presumption lies against their Knowledge of the Continuance of miraculous Powers, merely from their not insisting upon them. I may add, that the Mention of them in those Epistles, where they do occur, appears to have been owing chiefly to some Enquiries made by the Converts in Relation to them, or to some Cases wherein They stood in need of Direction concerning the Use of them; whereas these Questions being answered, and these Cases resolved by an inspired Apostle, there was less Room for future Difficulties, and of Course less Occasion for resuming the Mention of these miraculous Gifts. Some of the Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers appear from their *Contents* and *introductory* Expressions, to have been owing to *Enquiries* and *Applications for Advice* in Points of a very different Kind; Others to some particular Exigencies; All to Subjects

Subjects of a very remote Nature from the Question of *Miracles*.

A farther Remark may, I think, be offered on this Point, which to me appears to be of some Importance towards the Decision of it. Had these *Apostolical* Writers had any Occasion to introduce the *Subject of Miracles*, had They referred to those wrought *by the Apostles*, or *in their Times*, and taken no Notice of the *Continuance* of the same Powers among themselves, this might well have been thought to be some Prejudice against their Knowledge of such Continuance; but if They uniformly omitted *all Mention* of supernatural Interposition, and dwelt only on the *practical* Part of Christianity, then their *Silence* can be of no more Force against their Belief of Miracles in their own Days, than of those in the Days of the Apostles. Now it is very remarkable, that throughout the Epistles spoken of, this Part of the Evidence is totally passed over in Silence. There is no *Stress* laid upon; there is scarce any *incidental* Reference to the extraordinary Gifts bestowed on the *Apostles*, and their Fellow Labourers in the same Cause; and here again, whatever Reasons may be given for their Silence concerning the *first Miracles*, will be just as strong for their *continued Silence* with Regard to the
succeed-

succeeding ones. They often speak of the *Apostles*, and refer to them as eminent Examples of Piety and Virtue; They speak of the Holiness of their Lives, and of the Purity of their Precepts, which were the proper Points of Consideration to Those who admitted their Authority, and needed not to be reminded of their miraculous Gifts to support that Authority.

By this Time perhaps the Impartial Reader may find it not "so hard to conceive," why for the Space of fifty Years, as Dr. *M.* and Mr. *T.* represent it, there may possibly be no express Testimony concerning miraculous Powers, tho' they continued to be frequently exercised in the Church. The Reason is, because there are no Writers, now extant, whose Intent of Writing could lead them to mention such a Subject. It cannot indeed be proved, that there was such a *total Silence* for the Interval of half a Century, as Dr. *M.* asserts; for *Quadratus* and *Aristides* presented their Apologies to the Emperor *Adrian* within about half that Time from the Death of St. *John* the Evangelist, and appear from History to have met with good Success in them. In such *Apologies* We might reasonably expect to find such Claim mentioned, but their Apologies being lost, we cannot bring direct Proofs from
 them,

them, but can only supply that Defect by the Account of Others concerning them, and to this Purpose that exprefs Testimony of *Eusebius* forecited, who had Himself read them, appears to be very pertinent and considerable.

But says Mr T. " Look back to the
 " Acts of the Apostles, and We find the
 " Persons, Time, Place and Occasion cir-
 " cumstantially denoted, but here in the
 " Times We are treating of, when the Re-
 " ligion became every Day more dilated,
 " Nothing of this Nature ever once happen-
 " ed that was thought worthy to be re-
 " lated; a Supposition that in my Appre-
 " hension exceeds the Grounds of Credibi-
 " lity." (P. 14, 15.) Can this Gentleman
 in earnest think, that the Occasion and In-
 tent of the *Acts of the Apostles*, written to
 give an Account of the Propagation of Chris-
 tianity, and of the Means that contributed
 to it, serving equally to the *Conversion of*
Enemies, and the *Confirmation of Friends*, is
 to be parallel'd with that of *private Epistles*,
 directed *only* to Believers, to caution them
 against Divisions among themselves in Point
 of Church Communion, or to stir them up
 to a Holiness of Life suitable to their Holy
 Profession? Is it any Reflection on those
 Writers, that because St. *Luke* wrote to the
 Purpose,

Purpose, and mentioned the Miracles which so much assisted the Labours of the Apostles in the Propagation of the Gospel, they did not go out of their Way to do the same, when They were writing with another View, or upon a different Design? As soon as *Ecclesiastical Histories* were written, Miracles were taken notice of in *them* likewise, which could not well be expected in *Advices* and Directions concerning a *Holy Life*. The Difference with Respect to the more *circumstantial* Account of the Miracles recorded in the Inspired Writings, is readily allowed, and is a distinguishing Advantage on their Side; yet, perhaps, for that very Reason such *circumstantial* Relations were the less necessary afterwards, when the general Claim in the like Instances was known to be continued and maintained. It does not therefore by any Means follow, that nothing happened worth relating, because We are not favoured with more particular Relations of the several Instances. The known Declarations and Challenges of the Continuance of miraculous Power in the same Cases, that had before been recorded, might well be thought sufficient.

After all, It is by no Means admitted, that there is so total a Silence in the Apostolical Writers as is pretended; altho', if
there

there had, it might reasonably be accounted for from the foregoing Considerations. But Dr. *M.* allows, that They speak of *spiritual Gifts*, as abounding among the Christians of that Age, adding, without assigning any Reason for it, that these cannot reasonably be interpreted to mean any Thing more than the *ordinary Gifts* and Graces of the Gospel. Such an unsupported Assertion I called begging the Question; but Mr. *T.* observes, in Supply of what the Doctor is thought to have omitted, that “ if the Words will bear
 “ this Interpretation, without Force or Dis-
 “ tortion, the Reason of the Thing will de-
 “ termine their Meaning to ordinary Gifts
 “ rather than miraculous ones.” (P. 17.) The Reason for this is, that “ it is not prov-
 “ ed, or even made probable by other Ar-
 “ guments, that there were any such Things
 “ as miraculous Gifts then existing, and that
 “ the Probabilities, according to the Reason-
 “ ing just now laid down, seem to lie pretty
 “ strongly against it.” I shall be very willing to rest the Question upon this Point, whether there are not other clear Arguments to prove the Continuance of miraculous Powers at that Time; and whether Mr. *T.*’s Probabilities against it will bear Examination. I have offered something on both these Points already, and foresee an Occasion of resum-
 ing

ing the Consideration of them, for which Reason I shall not farther enlarge on them in this Place.

Dr. *M.* next attempts, and Mr. *T.* seconds Him in the Attempt, to shew that those Testimonies from these first Writers, which Archbishop *Wake* and *my Father* had laid some Stress on, as referring to the Continuance of miraculous Powers amongst them, are nothing to the Purpose. Dr. *M.* observes against the Archbishop, that “ He attempts to confirm his Opinion, not by
 “ any Facts, or express Testimonies drawn
 “ from Themselves, but by Inferences only,
 “ or Conjectures.” Which, said I, “ for
 “ the Reason before given,” (that is, because these Writers penned their Epistles on another Occasion, and with another View than to represent the *Evidence* of Christianity) was all the Evidence that the Nature of the Argument could reasonably admit. If whilst *Historians* and *Apologists*, whose proper Business it was, did All *unanimously* make express mention of Miracles, the *practical* Writers had likewise some *References* to the same in their Epistles, and “ if it can
 “ be shewn by *Inferences*, that They did thus
 “ refer to them, this I thought might be
 “ satisfactory to every impartial Enquirer.” Mr. *T.* without the least Notice again of
 this

this Distinction declares Himself dissatisfied, represents it, as if I had placed the whole Merits of the Cause upon *References* and *Inferences*, as the only Evidence to be expected; and insists upon better Authority before He yields his Assent. Whereas I was apparently speaking, as the Subject led me, only of the *Epistolary* Writers of the Apostolical Age, who piously endeavoured to compose some rising Differences, and to exhort all the Professors of Christianity, without Distinction, to agree in making true *Virtue* and *Holiness* the sincere Aim of all their Pursuits; and in *such Writers* I thought some *References* to the Continuance of *miraculous Powers* were all that could reasonably be expected, and might prove satisfactory to every impartial Enquirer. Mr. T. professes that his Sentiments are directly opposite; that is, He expects some *Historical* Accounts of the supernatural Means by which the Gospel was published, or some *Apologetical* Vindication of the Truth of Christianity from the Miracles wrought in Support of it, in Writings penned on a very different Occasion, and addressed to Those who knew and believed, and professed to believe all this already. This is the Sentiment directly opposite to mine, and I shall freely leave it to Others to patronize. Dr. M. Himself had observed, that

“ the

“ the whole Purport of the Writings of
 “ these Apostolical Fathers was to illustrate
 “ the Excellence and Purity of the Christian
 “ Doctrine.” (P. 3.) Which Observation
 was a sufficient Answer to All that He could
 infer from their *Silence* upon another Subject.
 They wrote, according to his own Account of
 them, to illustrate the *internal* Evidence of
 our Religion, and therefore it can be no Dis-
 advantage to the *external* Evidence that They
 did not enlarge upon *that*.

Dr. M. gives a brief Account of the pre-
 vious Arguments used by Archbishop *Wake*,
 to induce Us to believe the Continuance of
 Miraculous Powers amongst the Writers of
 those Epistles now under View, antecedent-
 ly to their supposed Testimonies in Relation
 to it; but the Dr. vouchsafes not a Word of
 Reply to them, and Mr. T. adds that “ in
 “ Truth it amounts to so very little, that it
 “ is quite needless to say any Thing to set
 “ the Force of it aside.” (P. 19.) This
 again is a very short Method of answering
 and *defending*, but I shall not follow the
 Pattern, but shall take Leave to make a Re-
 mark on the only Point, which in this Argu-
 ment Mr. T. thought fit to take Notice of.
 He says “ what *Justin Martyr* urges against
 “ *Trypho* the Jew, is entirely out of the pre-
 “ sent Question, as not coming within the
 F “ Compass

“ Compass of Time, the Testimonies of
 “ which We are now discussing.” This is
 in direct Contradiction to a Concession, which
 He had made but two Pages before, that
 “ if it was proved, or even made probable
 “ by other Arguments, that there were any
 “ such Things as miraculous Gifts existing,
 “ then He would be ready to admit, that
 “ Expressions of a doubtful Signification
 “ might very fitly be applied in Confirmation
 “ of those Arguments.” (P. 17.) It was
 therefore very much to the Purpose, for the
 Archbishop to introduce the express Testi-
 mony of the first Controversial Writer in De-
 fence of the Truth of Christianity, and one
 so very near to the Time of these Apostolical
 Fathers, in Favour of the Continuance of
 miraculous Powers, to confirm the less expli-
 cit Phrases of these *Epistolary* Writers, which
 are thought to mean the same. As it appears
 by the *Acts of the Apostles*, and by some of
 St. Paul’s Epistles, that these extraordinary
 Gifts were in Being just *before* these Epistles
 were penned, and by the Testimony of *Jus-
 tin Martyr*, and the subsequent Writers, that
 they continued in the Times *immediately fol-
 lowing*, these are strong Proofs, that Expres-
 sions, otherwise doubtful, of Those who
 wrote in this short Interval, are to be inter-
 preted to the same Sense, and are very per-
 tinently

tinently alledged as of Weight in this Connection. This Consideration is, I think, of Force in itself, and is so particularly according to Mr. T's own State of the Case; and therefore the mention of *Justin Martyr's* Testimony, was by no Means out of the present Question, because not within the Compass of Time, the Testimonies of which were under Consideration: Tho' if the Half-Century spoken of, be taken from the Death of the last Apostle, this Writer's Testimony would just be included.

After all, What the Archbishop offered on this Head, as *previous* to the Testimonies which He proposed to produce from these Writers themselves, is by no Means so inconsiderable, as to be passed over in such contemptuous Silence. I had, after enumerating his Arguments, observed, that " with these
 " Presumptions in Favour of these Apostolical
 " Writers, He proceeds to those Testimonies,
 " wherein They *do refer* to these miraculous Gifts," which gave Occasion to Mr. T. to say, as if I had been sensible that this was but of little Weight, that " all that this
 " learned Writer has thus far offered, Mr. D. Himself allows to be only *Presumptive*
 " ons." (P. 19.) I am not fond, whatever Others may be, of calling every Thing *Demonstration*, which appears convincing to me,

especially when it depends on *Inferences*, and the Union of several *collateral* Circumstances; nor would it have added to the Strength of these *Indications* of the Continuance of miraculous Gifts, as the Archbishop Himself calls them, if I had pronounced them to be conclusive and unanswerable. But *presumptive* Arguments have their Weight and Use, especially when laid in the Ballance against *Nothing*, or with other *Presumptions* amounting to *Nothing*, such as I apprehend those of Dr. M. and Mr. T's on this Point to be. They presume, that if miraculous Powers were continued in the Church for the *Conversion* of *Unbelievers*, Those, who wrote on another Subject for the *Edification* of the *Faithful*, would not have failed to take Notice of it; and that not *incidentally* only, but by full and express Testimonies, as if They had been writing for the *Conviction* of *Infidels*. Let Us now review the *previous*, or, if You please, *presumptive* Arguments offered by the Archbishop on this Side of the Question.

He observed in the First Place, that Qualifications of this Sort were considered in the Choice of the *inferior* Officers of the Church, and therefore much more, 'tis likely, in the Designation of *Superiors* to their Office; He confirmed the Assertion from *Acts* vi. 3, where in the Choice of *Deacons*, the People were

were directed to *look out Men full of the Holy Ghost, and of Wisdom*, and that the *extraordinary Assistance* of the Holy Spirit was hereby meant, appears from the 8th and 10th Verses of the same Chapter; where it is said, that *Stephen full of Faith and Power did great Wonders and Miracles among the People.*

---*And They were not able to resist the Wisdom, and the Spirit by which He spake.* “Now,”

says the Archbishop, “If such were the Care

“which they took in the Choice of those,

“who were to be admitted into the lowest

“Ministry of the Church; We cannot doubt,

“but that They were certainly much more

“careful not to admit Any into the highest

“Rank of Honour and Authority in it,

“but what were in a yet more eminent

“Manner endued with the same Gifts.”

(P. 167, 168.) And is there no Weight in

this Consideration? According to the best

Judgment that We can form of the proper

Occasion and Intent of Miraculous Powers,

they must be of most Use in the Hands of

Those, who were called to the most severe

and most frequent Tryals in Defence of their

Religion; and these were of Course the high-

est Officers and Governors of the Church.

What One of the Apostles said of Them-

selves, 1 Cor. iv. 9, is as applicable to their

immediate Successors, the first Bishops and

Pastors of the Church, that *God had set forth them last*, that is, as the principal Sufferers to crown the Triumph and compleat the Shew, for they *were made a Spectacle to the World, and to Angels, and to Men*. These were the principal Persons sought after on all Occasions, as the Objects of the Enemies Malice, and the chief Glory and Pattern of Believers, and in both Respects had the best Opportunity of exerting these miraculous Gifts, to the Confusion of Gainsayers, and Confirmation of Believers. If therefore even *Deacons* were to be thus qualified, because their Office, as Distributers of the Churches Treasury, would bring them more into Notice, and render them conspicuous, it may well be inferred, that Those in still higher Stations, who were to be selected as the chief Champions of the Christian Cause, should be distinguished by the same Powers, which They would so often be called on to exert.

But the Archbishop does not rest here. He proceeds to bring positive Evidence both from *Clemens Rom.* and *Clemens Alex.* that the Apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit in the Choice of the chief Rulers and Bishops of the Church; and the most obvious Sense of their Testimony amounts to a Declaration, not merely that they were chosen by Those, who had the *Gift of discerning Spirits,*

Spirits, but that they were therefore chosen, as fit Persons for this Office, because already distinguished by the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit. It is then added, that “ the very
 “ Imposition of Hands did in those Days con-
 “ fer the Holy Spirit in an extraordinary
 “ Manner upon those, who were ordained
 “ to the Ministry of the Gospel:” And a very pertinent Passage of Holy Scripture is brought to prove it. And is this likewise thought undeserving of all Notice and Answer? The Sacred Writings do so often join the *laying on of Hands*, and the immediate Effect in the Endowment of the Persons, so set apart for the Ministry, with *extraordinary Gifts*, that the inspired History may reasonably be admitted as the best Comment on the *Text* referred to: And that Text thus interpreted will stand as a *presumptive* Evidence, that Those, who were set apart to the same Office in the same Manner, (the same Occasion for extraordinary Assistance still continuing) were favoured with the same miraculous Powers.

The Archbishop adds, (P. 170.) that “ if
 “ We look to those Accounts, which still
 “ remain to Us of them, they will plainly
 “ shew Us, that they were endued, and
 “ that in a very singular Manner, with
 “ this Power and Gift of the Blessed Spirit.” He observes that Three of them

are by Name spoken of in the New Testament as Persons of great Endowments; St. *Barnabas* is said to be *a good Man, full of the Holy Ghost and of Faith*, Acts xi. 24. *Hermas* is mentioned by St. *Paul* among the first and principal Converts to Christianity. Rom. xvi. 14, and *Clement* is honoured with this Testimony from the same Apostle, that He was *his Fellow-Labourer*, and that *his Name was in the Book of Life*, Phil. iv. 3. If the Manner of mentioning the two latter be thought of little Weight, as containing Nothing more than might have been said of them, tho' they had not been distinguished by *supernatural Gifts*, it is to be observed, that the Stress is not laid on the bare Mention of them, but on the Mention of them as such *chief Persons*, at a Time when Miraculous Powers confessedly did abound. St. *Paul's* Epistle to the *Romans*, wherein mention is made of *Hermas*, is One of those Epistles wherein these *χαρίσματα*, or Spiritual Gifts, are spoken of; and St. *Clement* was Bishop of *Rome* near the same Time; and is it then a contemptible Presumption, that these Persons so distinguished by St. *Paul*, were favoured with those *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit, which appear to have been not infrequent amongst inferior Persons at that Time? Nay, according to Dr. *M's* own Opinion,

Opinion, that Miracles ceased with the Age of the Apostles, these distinguished Writers and Rulers in the Christian Church may reasonably be presumed to be endued with them. For *Clement* was martyred just before St. *John* died, and tho' the Time and Manner of *Hermas's* Death be uncertain, yet from the Time of his Writing his *Pastor*, which several learned Men have from the Contents of it, judged to be about thirty Years before, it may well be supposed that He did not outlive the Apostolical Age. The same Method of Reasoning will hold in Part, tho' not in the Whole, in Favour of *Ignatius* and *Poly-carp*. The former was made Bishop of *Antioch*, the latter of *Smyrna*, many Years before the Decease of St. *John*, in an Age therefore, when Miracles are allowed to have subsisted; and when, if Any were favoured with them, their chief Bishops and Rulers can scarce be supposed to have been destitute of them. And if They were favoured with them in the former Part of their Lives, Can it be supposed that there was a sudden Extinction of all such Gifts immediately upon the Death of the last Apostle? Would it not have been of Prejudice to the Christian Cause, if the same Persons, who had hitherto claimed the Power of working Miracles in its Defence, should all at once (the same Persecutions still raging against it)

it) be forced to own themselves deprived of any such Privilege? Would not this have been a Reflection on their former Pretensions, and have occasioned some Suspensions, that the Miracles heretofore said to have been wrought by them, were received rather thro' Want of Examination, than real Evidence, since the same Persons, on the same Occasion, were not able to repeat them? This is the Substance of the *presumptive* Arguments offered by Archbishop Wake, which are more easily neglected than answered. We are next to consider the Sense of those Passages in which He supposes a *Reference* to be made to miraculous Powers.

The First and Principal is that of St. Clement to the *Corinthians*, wherein he cautions them against Pride and Vanity, on Account of any *extraordinary* Endowments that they might be possessed of, such as the Faith of Miracles, Mystical Knowledge, or the Discernment of Speeches; for to these Endowments, says the Archbishop, the Expressions manifestly relate. Mr. T. replies, (P. 20.) that a Man may have Faith without the Power of working Miracles, that there is no additional Word in the Original to confine the Knowledge spoken of to *mystical Knowledge*, and that whatever the Meaning of these Endowments was, it was such as they could attain by the Use of
their

their own Faculties, because, as He says, They are here exhorted to attain them.---I would observe in the first Place, in Answer to this, that if the Original Words had *confined* the Gifts spoken of to the *Faith of Miracles*, to *mystical Knowledge*, and the like, then This would have been produced as an *express* and *decisive* Testimony, whereas it was introduced only as a Passage, which had *Reference* to this Point; and if from other Arguments it can be shewn, that it did refer to such *supernatural* Endowments, this will be sufficient to the Purpose for which it was alledged; and it is no Kind of Answer to insist merely, that it is *capable* of another Sense, or that the Original does *not confine* it to our Sense, when the contrary was never pretended. Why the Archbishop did not explain at large the Grounds on which He thought these Expressions *manifestly related* to *supernatural* Gifts, may well be supposed to be, that He thought it not necessary for Those, who read with *Attention* the Epistles of the Apostles, and of these their most immediate Successors, and observed the *Sameness* of the *Argument*, of the *Style*, and even of the *Persons*, to whom these Exhortations were addressed. St. *Clement* wrote to the same Disciples, at the same Place, and on the same Subject, that St. *Paul* had done not many Years, not more than twelve Years before. That

Apostle's

Apostle's Epistle to the *Corinthians* is, That, wherein He discourses more largely than in any other, of these *supernatural Gifts*, and as St. *Clement's* Epistle to the same People was written whilst some of the Apostles were still living, and therefore, according to Dr. *M's* own Scheme, whilst miraculous Powers did still subsist, if his Expressions are *capable* of the same Meaning, they are most reasonably to be interpreted by it. The *Occasion* on which their several Epistles were written, were much the same, and the Exhortations to Peace, Charity, and Humility are remarkably similar. St. *Paul* enumerates the several miraculous Endowments, urges them as Motives to *practical* Improvement, and represents them as of no Use or Value to the Person endowed with them without it. *Tho' I have the Gift of Prophecy, says He, and understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge, and tho' I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing.* 1 Cor. xiii. 2. St. *Clement*, on Occasion of the like Differences and Divisions in the Church, urges the like humble and condescending Spirit of *Charity*, as necessary to make all Sorts of Gifts useful, and enumerating in the same Manner the Endowments, which might be most likely to make Men look on Themselves as important and considerable, and which yet ought
to

to make Them the more Humble and Beneficent, expresses Himself thus, “ Let a
 “ Man be Faithful, let Him be Powerful in
 “ the Utterance of Knowledge, Let Him be
 “ Wise in making an exact Judgment of
 “ Words, Let him be pure in all his Acti-
 “ ons. But still by how much the more he
 “ seems to be above Others, by Reason of
 “ these Things, by so much the more will it
 “ behove him to be Humble-minded; and
 “ to seek what is profitable to All Men, and
 “ not his own Advantage.” Now Whoever
 observes how exactly *parallel* these Expressi-
 ons are to those of the Apostle, how near-
 ly the same Time they were written, how cri-
 tically on the same Occasion, and to the same
 Disciples, how punctually the same Number
 and Kind of Endowments are alluded to,
 can scarce hesitate to interpret the One by
 the Other; and tho’ Mr. T. adds, that
 “ Whoever can find in these Words any
 “ plain Allusion to Miraculous Powers as
 “ then subsisting, will do much more than
 “ He pretends to,” yet I think there is no
 great Presumption in such Pretensions, and
 that the Comparison of these Passages, with
 all the Circumstances forementioned, may
 well be thought sufficient to ascertain the
 Sense of that which is now before Us; and
 to shew that the Archbishop had some Rea-
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son on his Side, when He asserted, that to this Sense of miraculous Endowments, the Expression manifestly related. Mr. *T.* intimates that That Clause, “ Let Him be Pure “ in all his Actions,” may shew that He was speaking of natural Endowments; but it is observable that St. *Paul*, in the forecited parallel Passage, does likewise join *moral* Virtues to *supernatural* Gifts, and goes on to add, that tho’ He should dispense all that He had in the Relief of the Necessities of Others, and should even submit to Martyrdom Himself, yet it would avail Nothing without the real Temper of Charity and Humility. This latter Verse certainly does not prove, that the *Apostle* was not speaking of miraculous Powers in the former, and therefore neither is the same Method of speaking by St. *Clement*, any Disproof of his alluding to the same in the first Part of the Sentence: But the plain Meaning of Both was, that even the Union of extraordinary Gifts, and ordinary Graces, should but dispose them to the deeper *Humility*, in Consideration of the *Author* of all their Endowments.

But Mr. *T.* lays great Stress on this Sentence’s being an *Exhortation*, that these Endowments were to be acquired by a Man’s own Endeavours, and were therefore no supernatural Gifts. Were the Sentence certainly

ly to be understood as he interprets it, his Inference would not follow. Does not St. *Paul* speaking in the clearest Manner of Miraculous Gifts, direct these very *Corinthian* Disciples to be fervent in the Pursuit of them? *Covet earnestly the best Gifts*, 1 Cor. xii. 31. The Original is more full and determinate, to this Purpose, Ζηλῶτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ κρείττονα; and again, *Covet earnestly spiritual Gifts, but rather that Ye may prophesy*, 1 Cor. xiv. 1. Ζηλῶτε δὲ τὰ πνευματικά; μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε. The Means, by which their own Endeavours could contribute to the Attainment of these extraordinary Gifts, were probably *Zeal* for the Importance of Christianity, *Diligence* in the Propagation of it, and *Constant Prayer* to God that They might be Useful in his Service. These were the proper *Preparatives* for the extraordinary Illapses of the Divine Spirit upon the Faithful, and an Exhortation to cultivate and improve those Qualifications, was no Disproof, that the Fruits of the Spirit to be attained by them, were not *supernatural*. St. *Clement* might therefore in like Manner have repeated St. *Paul's* Advice, and have directed these *Corinthian* Disciples to *covet earnestly* those extraordinary spiritual Gifts, without the least Degree of Absurdity.

But

But the Sentence itself bears very plainly a different Sense; The former Part of it is not an *Exhortation*, but a *Supposition*. “ Let Any “ One,” says this Father, “ be endued with “ Faith, Knowledge, the Discernment of “ Speeches, &c.” that is, Be He never so eminent in all these Gifts, “ by how much “ the more He seems to excel Others, by so “ much the more will it behove Him to be “ Humble-minded.”---The whole is but one compleat Sentence, the Beginning of it is plainly *Hypothetical*, and the Ground of the Caution given in the Conclusion. There is no connecting Particle to join the Sentences, or to make Sense of them; as there must have been, if the former had really been an *Exhortation* to attain those Qualifications. Whatever therefore Mr. T. argues concerning these Gifts being natural, as being recommended to Mens Pursuit, is founded on a *Mistake*, and needs no other Answer. St. Clement’s Advice was not a Direction to possess themselves of these Endowments, but to be *Humble tho’* They were possessed of them.

Mr. T. adds that “ the Caution that follows “ is every whit as applicable upon his Interpretation; for that Humility and a right Application of Talents to the Good of Others “ are Virtues as needful to be recommended “ to

“ to Men of great Learning and improved
 “ Abilities as to a Person divinely inspired.”
 (P. 21, 22.) Such Cautions indeed are never improper or unseasonable; but since the *Occasions* of them are here brought into Competition, I cannot think that they were quite so needful, on Supposition that the *Corinthians* had just lost those supernatural Gifts, which a very little before abounded amongst them, and were now reduced to the common State of all other Men; as if they still flourished in those distinguishing Privileges of *Miracles, Prophecies*, and other *supernatural* Endowments. Such high Privileges were more likely to puff up *all* Minds, which were not on a constant Guard; St. *Paul* had just before found it necessary to give several Cautions on this Head; St. *Clement* repeats the same Caution without any Intimation of any such material Alteration that had happened in their Circumstances; and can this Caution then be thought every Whet as applicable to the One Case as to the Other? If the *Corinthians* had thus been deserted at once by the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit, whilst their Situation seemed to require them as much as before, they would probably have been *dejected* on such a Desertion, and would have been more likely to have needed some *Consolations* for their Support, than *Admoni-*

tions against Vain-Glory, in such Circumstances as could yield little Temptation to it. The *Repetition* of this Caution, and especially in the *Manner* in which it is *repeated*, is a Presumptive Proof, that they were under the same Danger in this Respect, that they were when St. *Paul* wrote to them to the same Purpose. This is a strong *Inference*, tho' it is no more; and much stronger than that, which presumes the Gifts spoken of to be *common* ones, because the *Corinthians* were required, as Mr. *T.* says, to improve Themselves in a natural Way; whereas no such Direction appears at all in this Place; and if it had appeared, might have been intended as a *Preparation* for the best and highest Endowments.

Mr. *T.* adds, (P. 22.) as if by Way of Reflection on the Position, that “ Mr. *D.* allows that the Question is to be determined “ by Inferences.” What Question does Mr. *D.* allow is to be thus determined? Not the Question, whether miraculous Powers were continued in the Church after the Death of the Apostles; He insists, that there is *express* and *positive Evidence* for that; but the Question, whether in particular these Apostolical Writers have in their Epistles taken any Notice of them: If This can be made out by *Inference*, it will be a sufficient Answer

swer to Dr. *M*'s Objection from their *supposed Silence*; and the more critically the Circumstances of the whole Case are examined, the more *satisfactory*, I am perswaded, the *Inference* will appear.

A Passage very full to the Purpose, which had been introduced by *my Father*, comes next under Consideration. It occurs in the Beginning of St. *Ignatius's* Epistle to the *Smyrneans*, which is thus addressed, Ἠλεημένη ἐν παντὶ χάρισματι, πεπληροφορημένη ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ, ἀνυστερήτῳ ὄνσῃ παντός χαρίσματος. Dr. *M*'s intimated Answer, and Mr. *T*'s express Defence of it is, that an Instance has been assigned, where “ the Word *χαρίσματα* is used by one of the Primitive Writers in a Place, where it can be understood in no other Sense than that of *ordinary Gifts*,” and that if this Word be ever so used, “ then there seems no Necessity why We should apply it otherwise in this Address of St. *Ignatius*.” (P. 23, 24.) I take the Liberty to differ from these Gentlemen in both Particulars. If the Word *χαρίσματα* had ever been used to signify only *common Gifts*, yet the Nature of the Phrase, the Purport of the Sentence, and the Comparison of it with parallel Passages of the Scriptures then in their Hands, must almost necessarily lead to the Interpretation—

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pretation of it in this Passage with Relation to *extraordinary* Endowments. If *χαρίσματα* signified indifferently either natural or supernatural Gifts, yet when St. Ignatius congratulates the Church of *Smyrna* upon *being mercifully blessed with every Gift*, and *being wanting in no Gift*, are not *both Sorts* most evidently implied? Would This Address have been true, if they had lately been deprived of those Gifts, which had abounded in the Church not long before? The very Form of the Sentence is full and significant to the same Purpose. According to Dr. M's Interpretation, St. Ignatius said the same Thing three Times over without any Variation, whereas if He referred to *Miraculous Powers* in the Beginning, then the Sentence is regular, and free from any improper Repetition, amounting to this only, that They were blessed with *supernatural* Endowments, *applied* them to the true Purposes of Faith and Charity, and thus abounding both in *Gifts* and *Graces*, were deficient in no Sort of Endowment. Dr. M. who insists, that “ these Words, as explained by the Context, “ manifestly signify nothing more than the “ ordinary Gifts of the Gospel, Faith and “ Charity,” had thus connected the latter Part, *being filled with Faith and Charity*, so as to be *wanting in no good Gift*; and upon
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my taking Notice of this, Mr. *T.* observes, that Archbishop *Wake* had done the same; and then observes, “ that Mr. *D.* has sometimes a very slender Regard to that learned “ Prelate’s Authority.” There would, I think, be a very considerable Difference betwixt the Insertion of such a Word in a *common Translation* to render it easy and familiar to the Reader, and the Insertion of it in a *Critical Examination* intended to ascertain the precise Meaning of the Passage: But however, the Point is very little material, if it was not intended, as I apprehended it was, to connect the second and third Parts of the Sentence more closely than the first, as if *Every Good Gift* was implied in Faith and Charity. Whereas the Kind of Triumph, wherewith *Ignatius* concludes this Part of the Salutation, in that They were *wanting in no Sort of Gift*, appears to have been the Result of both the forementioned Considerations, in that They were blessed with every *supernatural Power* and each *Christian Grace*. The Language in which the same Thing had been expressed in the *inspired Writings*, is a strong Confirmation of this Sense of it. The Writer and Readers of this Epistle knew what St. *Paul* had said before on this Subject; and He had expressed Himself so much in the same Manner, that

his Stile and Phraſe could ſcarce poſſibly have been uſed or underſtood in a Senſe ſo very different. That Apoſtle, in his firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, wherein He moſt largely diſcourſes of theſe *ſupernatural* Gifts, and under the very Title of *χαρίσματα*, expreſſes his Thanks to God for the Richneſs of his Diſtributions towards thoſe Diſciples, *inſomuch that They came behind in no Gift.* ὥστε ὑμᾶς μὴ ὑπερείδαι ἐν μηδενὶ χαρίσματι.

1 Cor. i. 7. Now what could the Members of the Church of *Smyrna* have thought of the *Biſhop of Antioch*, if He had uſed the *ſame Words* to them, and meant a very *different Thing*? Would not the Compariſon of this Sentence, with that of *St. Paul* to the *Corinthians*, have raiſed *Concern* rather than the *Joy* intended by the Congratulation, and have reminded them of their diſconſolate State in being deprived of thoſe *principal Gifts*, which abounded when the Apoſtle congratulated his Diſciples in the ſame Manner? Would They not have been ready to reply, that They were far from being *wanting in no Gift*, when They wanted thoſe *chief Gifts*, which diſtinguiſhed their immediate Predeceſſors? Nay the very *Term*, in which They were reminded that They were *not wanting in any Gift*, was itſelf *relative*, was uſed as ſuch in the inſpired Writings by

Way

Way of *Comparison* with the State of Others, and plainly meant, that They did not *come behind* or *fall short* of Others in this Particular.

These Reasons might be assigned for understanding the Passage in Question, of *supernatural* Gifts, even tho' the Term used had been *capable* of either Sense. But that is the next Point in Question. Mr. T. says, that Dr. M. has produced an Instance from St. Clement, wherein the Word *χαρίσματα* can be understood in no other Sense, than to signify Gifts of an *ordinary Kind*. I had taken the Liberty to own myself to be of a different Opinion, and to say, that the Sense in the Passage referred to is *full as rational and strong*, if We interpret it strictly of supernatural Endowments. Upon which Mr. T. without producing the Passage at large, or shewing that it was not capable of the Sense in which I had interpreted it, nay even without any Attempt of confirming his own, cries out, (P. 23.) “ This it is to be blessed with “ superior Penetration ; for my Part I only “ pretend to be a common Reader, &c.” Reflections and Flights of this Kind have no Relation to the Argument, nor do in the least contribute to strengthen or to recommend it. I shall therefore pass over this without farther Notice, and shall proceed

ceed to some Observations on the Passage before Us. I observe then in the first Place, that Mr. *T.* has carried his Assertion farther than Dr. *M.* nay farther than the Passage from St. *Clement*, according to his own Interpretation of it, would justify Him. “ If, “ says He, the Word *χαρίσματα* is ever “ made Use of to signify *extraordinary Gifts*, “ &c. And that it is applied in this Sense “ even by these Writers Themselves, Dr. “ *M.* has shewn by producing an Instance “ from St. *Clement*, where it can be under- “ stood in no other.” But it happens, that the Instance produced by Dr. *M.* mentions only the Word *χάρισμα* in the *singular* Number, and tho’ this may be of a less determinate Meaning, and an Instance may possibly be assigned in the sacred Writings, where it signifies no more than a Gift in general, yet in the *Plural* Number it is more restrained in its Signification, and is used invariably for *supernatural* Gifts throughout the New Testament, without a single Exception. To prevent Confusion and Mistake in so material a Point, it was highly *proper* to appropriate some Word to this fixed and determinate Meaning; and in *Fact* the inspired Writers have so appropriated it; their Successors understood it so; Some of them have noted it, and All have followed the Example
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by using the Word *χαρίσματα* in the same Sense. Whatever therefore may prove to be the Sense of the Citation by Dr. M. yet it will not prove, as Mr. T. asserts, that the Word is ever used in the *Plural* Number, to signify only Gifts of an *ordinary* Kind.

Let us now look to the Passage itself. And should I only repeat the Assertion, that “ the Sense of it is full as strong and rational, “ if We interpret it strictly of supernatural “ Endowments,” I should say as much for this Interpretation, as Mr. T. has said for any other. But even this Opinion it may be observed, was delivered not without Caution and Reserve. I did not say in Mr. T’s peremptory Manner, that it could be understood in no other Sense, but that this was *as rational and strong* as any other ; plainly Meaning, that no great Stress could either Way be laid on a Passage, which might without Impropriety be interpreted either Way. And I see no Reason to alter this Opinion. The Words are, Σωζέω ἐν ἡμῶν ὅλον τὸ σῶμα ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ὑποτασσέω ἕκαστῳ τῷ πλησίον αὐτῶ, καθὼς καὶ ἐτέθη ἐν τῷ χαρίσματι αὐτῶ. *Clem. Ep. I. ad Cor. §. 38. Mr. T. (P. 23.)* “ professes ingenuously, that this Passage “ might have come before Him a thousand “ Times, and no Thought of supernatural “ Endowments would once have entered
into

“ into his Head.” It may be so, but He, who afterwards rightly insists on using his own Reason, excluding Human Authority in the Interpretation of such Quotations, and judging for Himself, should the more easily excuse Another, who claims the same Privilege, and might have forbore that contemptuous Method of treating One who happened to differ from Him in Opinion. For it may possibly appear, that a Thought, which Mr. T. says, never once entered into his Head, might yet, without any Absurdity, come into Another Person’s; and with Respect to the Point before us, I must as ingenuously profess, that the Thought, which He so warmly explodes, was the very first that occurred to me on the Occasion. When I read St. Paul’s Instructions and Exhortations to the *Corinthians* about supernatural Gifts, and find Him *appropriating* a particular Word to express them by, when I find Him specifying distinctly the Order of them, directing his Disciples to regard it, and to apply them all to a good Use; when I observe Him joining the Mention of *Social Virtues* with these *extraordinary Endowments*, and illustrating the Union of all Believers by the Coherence and mutual Use of the several Members in the *natural Body*; When I next turn to the Writings

tings of One of his Contemporaries, addressed to the same People, on a like Occasion, with the Use of the same Word known to be so *appropriated*; when I observe the Advice, the Connection, and the Application to be exactly *parallel*, the Thought of the same Meaning, in the same Phrase and Method, and Design of Writing, pressed unavoidably upon me as the most obvious Interpretation; and the Review of the Argument has confirmed me in the same Opinion. “ Let therefore our whole
 “ Body be saved in Christ Jesus: And
 “ Let Every One be subject to Another according to the Order in which He is placed by
 “ the Gift of God,” says the Archbishop’s Translation. An *English* Reader might easily enough have passed over this without thinking of *supernatural* Endowments; but when We are reminded, that the Word here translated *the Gift*, is the very same by which St. Paul always expressed *an extraordinary Gift*, where is the Difficulty or Absurdity of Understanding it then, with Relation to the *Distinction* made amongst them by *supernatural* Endowments, and the different Kinds and Degrees of them? Would not this Passage then bear a plain Allusion to the Doctrine and Precepts of St. Paul in the xiith Chapter of his first Epistle to these *Corinthians*, and
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particularly in Verse 28, &c. and be very reasonably interpreted as a Repetition of the same Advice? Mr. T. I know, will say, that this Passage in *St. Clement* is explain'd by the subsequent Part of the Paragraph, which is wholly an *Exhortation* to the proper Use and Application of Talents natural, or naturally acquired, such as Strength, Riches, Wisdom, Purity. But I say again, that the Sense will be just as *rational* and *strong*, if This be considered as an *Addition to* rather than an *Explanation of* the forecited Exhortation in the Beginning of the Paragraph. The Method of the Discourse will be as regular and well connected, and the Meaning of it as full and pertinent, if We suppose *St. Clement* first to exhort them to Humility and mutual Subjection, according to the *extraordinary Endowments* with which They were distinguished; and then to proceed to enforce on them the like sober and benevolent Use of those *ordinary Talents*, which might seem to be more owing to Themselves, to their own Industry and Merit. This is the Method which *St. Paul* in several Instances has observed, directing his Disciples to a wise and pious Application of all Talents extraordinary and ordinary; specifying first the former as of superior Dignity,

nity, and then descending very regularly to the Mention of the latter, as *St. Clement* has done in the Paragraph before us.

But I have a farther Reason against understanding the After-Exhortation of *St. Clement* concerning the Use of *ordinary Talents*, as an Explanation of the Passage in Dispute. For tho' the Archbishop has translated it, " Let every One be Subject to Another according to the Order in which He is placed by *the Gift of God*," yet the Original Words are ἐν τῷ χαρίσματι αὐτοῦ, *by his Gift*, that is plainly by *the Gift of Jesus Christ*, who is expressly mentioned in the first Part of the Sentence. This Exhortation therefore relates to the right Management of *that Gift*, that *peculiar Gift*, which was communicated to them by their Saviour, as Head of the Church; whereas the Variety of those other *common Talents*, which He speaks of afterwards, such as Those of Strength, Riches, and the Like, were the usual Dispensations of *Providence*, distinct from and antecedent to the Covenant of *Christ*; and there is Nothing in all the subsequent Parts of the Paragraph, but what might be as properly applied to *Heathens* as to *Believers*, which does not therefore look like a *Paraphrase* only on the introductory Admonition addressed peculiarly to *Christians*.

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St. *Clement* seems here, as if on Purpose to prevent Mistake, to distinguish betwixt the *peculiar* Gift of *Christ*, and the *general* Gifts of *God*, and varies his Expressions with great Propriety in Relation to the different Subject, mentioning our *Saviour* particularly, whilst He had a View to the *extraordinary* Endowments conferred by Him on his chosen Disciples; but referring expressly to *God* only, when He comes to speak of the mutual Benefit of *common* Gifts, and enforcing the proper Application of them from Considerations relative only to the common Creator of all. If Mr. *T.* is disposed again, upon this Correction of the Translation, to observe that I have sometimes a very slender Regard to the Archbishop's Authority, the old Apology of *magis amica veritas* might plead my Excuse; but in Reality the Archbishop has referred to this Sense in the *Marginal* Translation, tho' not foreseeing any Controversy about this particular Passage, He thought the Alteration not material, and in some Respect or other more easy to the Reader.

That Passage of St. *Ignatius* in his Epistle to the *Romans*, wherein he desires them "not to prevent his Martyrdom by an unreasonable Good-will," comes next under Review. *My Father* has interpreted this as
a Proof,

a Proof, that “ the Prayers of the Primitive Christians had Power to disable the wild Beasts from assaulting the Martyrs, who were exposed to them.” Dr. *M.* says This meant no more, than that They should not use any Intercession or Interest at *Rome* to preserve Him, and adds that to this Sense it is expressly restrained by the Relation of his Martyrdom, and by Dr. *Cave*’s Interpretation of it. Mr. *T.* approves of these Quotations as speaking full and expressly to his Purpose, and says “ Mr. *D.* has not offered one Word to invalidate these historical Accounts that are given of it, and seem natural and easy.” (P. 26.) What Kind of Answer is fit to be given to such an Assertion as this? I had spent at least four Pages on this Point, to invalidate that Sense of those historical Accounts, and to shew that they could not admit of that Sense of saving Him by their *Interest* and *Intercession*. Dr. *Cave*’s History and Opinion are founded on the Relation of the Martyrdom of St. *Ignatius*, and are allowed by Dr. *M.* to be only his Interpretation of that Passage, and so can give no additional Force to the Original Account. The Passage itself I cited at large, and shewed that the Words did not imply any more, and that the Circumstances both of the Martyr, and of the
other

other Christian Brethren at that Time, could not possibly admit them to imply any more, than that They should not endeavour to raise up the Populace in his Favour against the Decision of the Emperor; which could do no Good and might do Harm. This might have been interpreted into *Sedition* by their Governors, and might have brought an Imputation on the Christian Cause, which the Primitive Patrons of it were always studious to avoid. May I not, in my Turn, ask, Does not This Account of this Passage *seem natural and easy*? And was not this Interpretation of it, confirmed by several corroborating Circumstances, *offering* at least *one Word* to invalidate the Historical Accounts cited by Dr. M. as expressly restraining it to his Purpose? Mr. T. allows that “ I have indeed taken a good deal of
 “ Pains to shew that *Ignatius’s* Words can
 “ be understood of Nothing but *Prayers,*” which I really thought was a very proper Way of proceeding, and another strong Method of invalidating those Historical Accounts, as explicatory of this Passage. Mr. T. prudently declines “ following me thro’
 “ the Particulars of my Reasoning, and contents Himself with referring the Reader
 “ to the Epistle itself.” If then He really thinks, that the Contents of an ancient
 Epistle

Epistle are best to be judged of, by omitting all Information relative to the Circumstances of the *Writers*, and of the Persons *to whom* it was *written*, and that the Knowledge of, and attentive Regard to such Particulars, are more likely to mislead Us in the Sense of it, I shall leave Him to enjoy this Opinion likewise undisturbed; and shall always Myself endeavour, to the best of my Power, to get Information in such Circumstances, as the most probable Means of ascertaining the true Sense of the Author. I should have thought it had been the proper Part of a *Defender* in this Place, to have followed me thro' the Particulars of this Reasoning, to have shewn, what Authority the *People of Rome* had to reverse the Sentence passed by the *Emperor* Himself, who was then absent; and what extraordinary Interest the *Christians* then had amongst the *Governors of Rome*, to induce them to exert their Authority in so high an Instance. His Friend Dr. M. We know, thinks that a Century after, "when this Religion was much more dilated," as Mr. T. expresses it, the Friends of the Christian Cause had not Interest enough to get an Apology on their Behalf presented to the Emperor or to the Senate. It rested on his *Defender* to reconcile this, and to shew what Probability

there was of the Christian Brethren being able to save *Ignatius* by their *Interest* at *Rome*, which could thus raise his Apprehensions of being still preserved, and induce Him to write to them in this Manner. Apparently He thought Himself in *Danger*, as He esteemed it, of being saved some Way or other by their Endeavours, and therefore earnestly entreats them not to prevent his Martyrdom by their unseasonable Goodwill. I have offered my Reasons, why I think it could not be by their *Interest*, which is Dr. *M*'s Solution of it; and I may truly say, that Mr. *T*. “ has not offered one Word “ to invalidate them.”

The same Arguments, which seem to hold strongly against the Probability of their saving Him by any *Intercession*, seem of equal Force against their doing it by *any ordinary* or Human Means. *Force*, They could not, They would not use on such an Occasion. Their *Number* at that Time, and their *Doctrine* at all Times, exclude the Supposition. The insuperable Difficulty then of accounting for this Request of the Martyr from any *natural Means*, in which the Brethren at *Rome*, could preserve Him, strongly favours the Inference drawn by my Father, concerning the *supernatural* Effects wrought by the *Prayers* of the Primitive Christians. With this previous

vicious Instruction as to the Situation of *Ignatius* and his Fellow-Christians, I shall readily join with Mr. T. in “ desiring every One “ to look over the Epistle itself, and see what “ He can make of it.” Here He will find repeated Mention of their *Prayers*, but not a Word of their *Interest*, or of any other *Human* Means, by which They could contribute to his Preservation. He will find a remarkable *Antithesis*, by which He desires them to *promote* his Martyrdom, namely, by their *Prayers*, by which We may very reasonably conclude, what were the Means by which He was fearful, that They should *prevent* it. But in this Place Mr. T. charges me with a Sort of designed Contrivance of imposing upon my Readers. “ I observe” says He, “ Mr. D. has brought down these Words, “ *Pray for me, that God would give me “ Strength, &c.* out of the Place where they “ stand, and joined to the others, to make “ them look like one entire Sentence.” There could be little Danger of any Imposition in this, as the Passage now stands, since the Original was so easy to be consulted; and that it was not intended, may appear from that cautionary Remark, “ *Almost* immediately before He said, Only Pray for me, “ *&c.*” But in Reality This Omission was the *Transcribers*, or the *Printers*. In my first

MS. which I have now before me, I find the usual Mark inserted, which distinguished the Sentences not to be immediately joined in the Original Author, and this Censure had been removed, if the printed Copy had answered the written one, which stands thus, “ *Pray for me that God would give me Strength that I may not only be called a Christian, but may also be found one---I am willing to die for God, unless you hinder me.*” However, no different Subject is introduced by *Ignatius*, betwixt these Sentences, no Consideration but what is *relative* to the Case of his own Suffering. Both *before* and *after* the Mention of their *Prevention of his Martyrdom by an unseasonable Good-will*, which He so earnestly dissuades them from, He desires their *Prayers* to contribute towards it; and if any Thing can be judged of at all from the *Context*, certainly this Connection is a strong Indication, that He feared They would *prevent* by their *Prayers*, what He was so vehemently desirous to *accomplish by that Means*.

Mr. T. observes, that Archbishop *Wake* has in the Margin translated it, unless You *forbid* me, instead of *hinder* me, and thinks this Word “ manifestly implies some other Kind of Interposition different and distinct from that of *Prayer*.” (P. 27.) I do
not

not see the Difference. Either Word might very properly be used, if they crossed his earnest Desire of Martyrdom by any Method whatever; and they might be said to *forbid* his Departure at least as well by fervent *Applications* to the Throne of *Heaven*, as by their *Intercessions* to the Powers of the *Earth*. In the former They had good Interest, in the latter They had none at all, nor could at that Time have sufficient to that Purpose. The Inconsistency of Dr. *M*'s Interpretation is a Confirmation of this, and the Difficulty of putting any other Sense upon it, strengthens that, which most obviously arises from the Import and Connection of the Epistle itself.

But Mr. *T*. has yet a farther Reserve. He has learned of Dr. *M*. when He is pressed with the Evidence which lies before them, to go off from that and to call for other, which He knows or thinks cannot be had; and then to declare, that that only would be satisfactory to him. Thus the Dr. insisted, that Those, who would answer Him, must add to the Accounts of the Primitive Writers, and that when They assert, that many were raised from the Dead, They must specify, *Who* the particular Persons were, that were so raised: And thus Mr. *T*. desires that “ an
“ Instance may be authentically vouched of

“ some other Person, who was at that Time
 “ actually delivered from apparent Death.
 “ by Virtue of *Prayer*, and then He will
 “ give up the Debate.” If such an In-
 stance had been upon Record, We need not
 have been arguing so long upon the *Cir-*
cumstances of this, and from the Manner,
 in which this Controversy has been ma-
 naged, I make no Doubt but Evasions
 would have been found in such a Case
 however authentically vouched. But if there
 are strong Testimonies of supernatural Effects
 wrought by the *Prayers* of the Faithful,
 This will be a strong Confirmation of ~~this~~
 Interpretation of St. *Ignatius's* Request,
 and the Want of other *particular Instances*
 on Record will no more invalidate the *Ge-*
neral Evidence than in the Case of raising
 the Dead mentioned by Dr. *M.*

Now there is very remarkable Evidence
 both *before* and *after* this Epistle of *Ignatius*
 to the *Romans*, setting forth the Power of
 the *Prayers* of the Church in the Preserva-
 tion of *their* Lives, whose Continuance in it
 was of Importance to the Christian Cause,
 and which may reasonably be admitted as a
 Comment on his Request, who was so
 zealous for Martyrdom. He appears not
 to have been without Grounds for his Ap-
 prehensions of being preserved this Way, but
 has

has a plain Allusion to the Reasoning and Determination of St. Paul on the same Subject. That Apostle plainly and repeatedly ascribes his Deliverances, even his *extraordinary* ones, to the Supplications of the Faithful on his Behalf. In the 1st Chap. of his 2d Epistle to the *Corinthians*, ver. 8, &c. He says, *We would not, Brethren, have You Ignorant of our Trouble, which came to Us in Asia, that We were pressed out of Measure, above Strength, insomuch that We despaired even of Life: But We had the Sentence of Death in Ourselves, that We should not trust in Ourselves, but in God which raiseth the Dead, who delivered Us from so great a Death, and doth deliver: In whom We trust that he will yet deliver Us: You also helping together by Prayer for Us, that for the Gift bestowed on Us by the Means of many Persons. Thanks may be given by Many on our Behalf.* Here the *χάρισμα*, the extraordinary Gift of his Deliverance, in a Case quite desperate, is expressly attributed to the united Prayers of the Church. In his Epistle to the *Philippians*, wherein He mentions the Strait that He was under, betwixt his Desire of Death for his own Sake, and his Desire of Life for the farther Service of the Church, readily determining like Ignatius, that for Himself it was far better to depart

and to be with Christ, yet declares his Foresight, that they would preserve Him longer in Life by their Devotion. *I know*, says He, *that this shall turn to my Salvation*, or Deliverance, as it should have been rendered, *thro' your Prayer and the Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*; v. 19. That by σωτηρία was here meant Salvation or Deliverance from his present Imprisonment is plain not only by the preceding Mention of his additional Affliction in Bonds, but also from the Repetition of the same Thing in the 25th Verse, just after the Determination of the fore-mentioned Strait, *I know that I shall abide and continue with You all for your Furtherance and Joy of Faith*. He says the same Thing in his Epistle to Philemon, written during the same Confinement. *Prepare me also a Lodging, for I trust that through your Prayers I shall be given unto you*, v. 22. Might not this repeated Mention by St. Paul of his Preservation and longer Continuance in Life, as owing to the *Prayers* of the Faithful, very reasonably be thought to make Ignatius apprehensive, that He might meet with some extraordinary Deliverance by the same Means, which therefore He earnestly deprecates, as being *desirous* of the Honour of Martyrdom, and of an immediate Release in his now advanced Age? In this View his Request

Request in his Epistle was natural and rational, and such as He could scarce avoid making in that Case, when He was not desirous Himself of any such supernatural Interposition in his Favour, as Others might be desirous of for Him. How could He do otherwise, in such a Situation, than beg fervently of them, that They would not attempt his miraculous Deliverance by particular *Supplications* on his Behalf? The particular Injunction of St. *James*, concerning the Use of *Prayer* in miraculous Interpositions in the Case of *Healing*, is not foreign to this Point. The Interposition was as supernatural in the Case of a Deliverance from a desperate Disease, as from a desperate Persecution, and *Devotion* was no more a *natural* Means of effecting the One than the Other. The Text referred to, I am sensible, is not without some Difficulty on every Interpretation, but it is sufficiently plain, that it related to the *extraordinary* Gift of Healing, to be effected by *Praying* and *Anointing with Oyl*. This is evident from the Phrases, ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμνοντα, --- and πολὺ ἰσχύει δέησις δικαίᾳ ἐνεργουμένη. These Expressions imply such *Prayer* as is founded on the *Faith of Miracles*, or is uttered by the immediate Impulse of the Spirit; and This Sense of them is confirmed by the Example immediately

ately given of *Elias*, who by such Impulse first brought on a long Drought by his *Prayers*, and at length reversed it by the same Method. The joint Prescription of *Anointing with Oyl*, and especially the Doing it in the *Name of the Lord*, that is, of *Christ Jesus*, was an additional Proof, that the Case spoken of was that of a *miraculous Cure*, and the Success is here expressly ascribed to the *Devotions* of the Faithful. If the Person was desirous of such an extraordinary Interposition in his Favour, and the Elders of the Church being called together on the Occasion found themselves endowed with the *Faith of Miracles*, or thought this Occasion worthy of such an extraordinary Interposition, and that the General Promise was applicable to the particular Instance before them, then They might proceed with Authority and Security, and their *Prayer* should certainly prove effectual to the Recovery of the Person for whom They interceded. This *Text* is, I think, “ an authentick Voucher, that Some
 “ Persons were at that Time actually delivered
 “ from apparent Death by Virtue of *Pray-*
 “ *er* ;” and tho’ this was not in the Case of a Persecution, yet where the Importance of the Person’s Preservation was thought worthy such an extraordinary Interposition, there in the Reason of the Thing, the Use
 and

and Intent of the *Faith of Miracles*, and the Means of exerting it by *Prayers*, were just as applicable in every Case, whether the apparent Death as Mr. T. calls it, was threatned by *natural* or *violent* Means. *Ignatius* might well think Himself to be of Consequence enough for the Elders of the Church to interpose in this Manner on his Behalf, and therefore instead of desiring *supernatural* Assistance on the Occasion, He desires rather, that the very Means of it might not then be used.

It may perhaps be thought still more to the Purpose, that the same Means of miraculously preserving some eminent Saints were successfully practised *after* the Time of *Ignatius*, and that even where Death had not been prevented, Life was restored by the Prayers of the Faithful. The Testimony of *Irenæus*, elsewhere cited by Dr. M. is full to this Point. “ As our Lord and his Apostles
 “ says He, raised the Dead by *Prayer*, so
 “ in our Communion, very often upon some
 “ *necessary Occasion*, when the whole Church,
 “ that is in any such Place, has entreated
 “ it by Fasting and continued *Supplication*,
 “ the Spirit of the Dead Person has return-
 “ ed into Him, and the Man was given back
 “ to the Prayers of the Saints. *Quemadmo-*
 “ *dum Dominus excitavit, (sc. mortuos) &*
 “ *Apostoli*

“ *Apostoli per Orationem; & in Fraternitate,*
 “ *ſæpiſſime propter aliquid neceſſarium, eâ quæ*
 “ *eſt in quoque Loco, Eccleſiâ univerſâ poſtu-*
 “ *lante per Jejunium & Supplicationem mul-*
 “ *tam, reverſus eſt Spiritus mortuo, & donatus*
 “ *eſt Homo Orationibus Sanctorum.”* Iren. adv.
 Hær. Lib. II. C. 56. This is, I think, an au-
 thentick Teſtimony of more than a ſingle
 Inſtance of a Perſon delivered not from *appa-*
rent but *aſtual Death*, by Virtue of *Prayer*, a
 plain Intimation of the Method, by which
Ignatius meant to deſire, that they would not
 prevent his Release, and a ſtrong Confirmation
 of my Father's Opinion before cited, that
 the *Prayers* of the Primitive Chriſtians had at
 leaſt as much Power as He has aſcribed to
 them.

Mr. T. proceeds exulting (P. 27.) “ Will
 “ Mr. D. then perſiſt in affirming, that the
 “ Arguments of the Archbiſhop and his
 “ Father ſtand in their full Force for any
 “ Thing the Dr. has ſaid againſt them?
 “ Truly,” ſays He, “ I ſhould believe no
 “ Man upon Conſideration can well be ſo
 “ ſanguine.” Mr. D. finds not the leaſt
 Reaſon to abate any Thing of his Aſſertion
 either from what Dr. M. has offered, or his
 Second has added, nay He is the more firm-
 ly perſwaded of the Truth of it, from this
 Review of their united Objections. Nor does
 He

He think that Mr. T. has supported his Reflection on the two forementioned Writers with any Degree of Argument equal to the Nature and Freedom of the Censure, that
 “ They were possessed of a Notion, which
 “ though perhaps They knew not well how
 “ They came by, They were willing to
 “ maintain, and as They could find no
 “ better Arguments to fetch in to their Assistance, They were compelled to employ such as are weak and inconclusive,
 “ &c”. (P. 28.) This is much more easily said than proved. They came by their Notion from a very intimate Acquaintance with the Writings of all the Primitive Fathers, and a Critical Knowledge of their Style and Language, as well as of their particular Situation and Circumstances. They offered their Reasons for their Opinion, which I am still so sanguine as to believe will be thought the more firmly established by the Attempts which have been made to invalidate them.

Mr. T. returns to me and my Observations. I had said, with a View to these Primitive Martyrs, whose Testimonies We have been reviewing, that “ They spoke and wrote
 “ just as it must be supposed that They
 “ would have done, if Miracles were commonly worked among them;” Mr. T. declares his Opinion to be directly the contrary,

ry, and then asks, (P. 28.) “ Who has the
 “ best Right and Claim to the Conclusion;
 “ They who assert, or They who deny the
 “ Proposition?” By all Means They, who
 give the *best Reasons* for their Opinion. But
 He adds, “ You say the Writers of the
 “ Time prove it; Dr. M. says They are si-
 “ lent upon it: Can any Proof be drawn from
 “ their Silence? If We are to believe it, it
 “ must be upon some Evidence. If there
 “ be no Evidence, Who is to believe it?”
 It is really no easy or agreeable Task to ar-
 gue with a Gentleman, who can in this
 Manner *mistake* or *misrepresent* the State of
 the Case, and who needs continually to be
 reminded of the Point, which it lay upon
 Him, as the *Defender* of Dr. M. to prove.
 He repeats the Mistake, which He has shewn
 in the Lines just now cited, P. 36. where
 He desires to “ appeal to Myself, and on
 “ the Supposition, that I had never heard
 “ any Thing concerning the Continuance of
 “ these Powers, and was now to be con-
 “ vinced of it, candidly to ask me, whether
 “ I sincerely think, that the Testimonies
 “ which have been alledged, and just been
 “ examined, are of Weight enough to pro-
 “ duce this Conviction.” To which it will
 be sufficient to answer, that This is not the
 Question in Dispute betwixt Dr. M. and his
 Oppo-

Opponents. The Testimonies from the Apostolical Fathers are not the *only*, or the *principal* Evidences produced for the Conviction of Those, who question the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Church. When They are compared with the *like Expressions* by the Apostles in the Age immediately preceding, which did unquestionably relate to *miraculous* Powers, and with the declared *End and Intent* of such supernatural Gifts, *which Reasons* continued to subsist in their full Force in their Time,---and with the *positive Evidence* of those Writers immediately succeeding them, whose View in Writing led them to make Mention of them, and who accordingly did actually claim the Continuance of such Powers;---When They are thus considered with all collateral Circumstances, they now appear plainly to me to relate to the same *miraculous* Gifts, whether they might of themselves alone have proved sufficient or not, to have worked the same Conviction, if I had been ignorant of the *Situation or Style* of the Writers, and of every *other Particular* relating to them. But in the present Light attending them, they are satisfactorily to be vindicated from Dr. M's Interpretation of them, and much more strongly from the Application which He wanted to make of them to his own Purpose.

He

He urges the *supposed Silence* of these first Writers, as a presumptive Argument against the positive and express Testimonies of the subsequent ones, and then endeavours to shew, that the Passages, which are usually brought from these Apostolical Epistles to confirm the received Opinion, *may* be otherwise interpreted. It would be a competent Answer to this Objection, should We allow all these Passages to be really *doubtful*, and insufficient of themselves to work any absolute Conviction either Way, since whilst they remain capable of *either* Interpretation, no Argument can be drawn from them to the Disadvantage of the more express Testimonies of succeeding Writers. Those more express Testimonies may well ascertain the Meaning of the foregoing *dubious* ones, but cannot be any Ways hurt or lessened by them. You must first take it granted, that these latter are falsified, before You can make any Application of the former to your Purpose. Nothing could have been of any Weight to disprove all After-Pretensions, but the Positive *Disclaiming* of these Powers by these Apostolical Writers, which would indeed have made it highly improbable, that They should have been *revived* in succeeding Times. But the poor Attempt of Dr. M. to prove this is the single Point, which

Mr.

Mr. T. has thought fit to give up, tho' it was the only one which it was material to his Argument on this Head to have maintained. Nothing less than this can tend to invalidate the *distinct* and *express* Evidence of the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in After Times; since if We find such Evidence afterwards, We find Expressions in these, which may reasonably be interpreted by them. If it can be shewn, that there are Expressions *capable* of such a Sense, and that the Context is as rational and consistent according to this Sense as any other, then tho' our Decision upon the Whole be not peremptory or demonstrative, yet it is sufficiently conclusive against the Force of Dr. M's Objection, or the Use, which He attempted to make of it. Mr. T. is inclined to believe, the Testimonies of these Apostolical Writers would not have convinced any one of the Continuance of Miraculous Powers, who had heard Nothing of them before, or as I should chuse to express it, who had no other Reasons to believe them. If We should allow this, yet still We may insist, that Dr. M. cannot prove the *Silence* of these first Writers, nor much less therefore build any Thing upon it to hurt the Credit of the succeeding Witnesses. These are very distinct Questions,

I

tho'

tho' Mr. T. has repeatedly confounded them. The Argument of their Meaning, as drawn by *Inferences*, if not alone sufficient to establish the main Point of the Continuance of Miracles amongst them, is however sufficient to obviate the Doctor's Exception of their having *omitted* the Mention of them. When therefore I said, that " these Primitive Mar-
 " tyrs spoke and wrote just as it must be sup-
 " posed that They would have done, if Mi-
 " racles were commonly worked among
 " them." This is abundantly justified by the Passages, which have been produced from them, wherein they used the same Phrases that Others had without Question used of *miraculous* Gifts, without any Intimation, that They meant them in a *different* Sense, and farther referred to Events, which could not be accomplished by natural Means, and which several Parallel Passages have shewn, were then frequently brought about by *supernatural* Interposition.

To return then to Mr. T's Queries, These Proofs I apprehend give a better Right and Claim to the Conclusion of Those, who *vindicate* the forementioned Assertion, than to that of Those who *reject* it. The Testimonies of these Writers, as every Way circumstantiated, do in my Judgment strongly prove a *Reference* to miraculous Gifts, as then sub-
 sisting,

sisting, but at least they exclude a Possibility of proving the contrary from their Writings, without begging the Question, as to the Sufficiency of the succeeding Evidence. Mr. T's own Concession, that if there are any other Arguments for the main Question, these Expressions of doubtful Signification may very fitly be applied to the Confirmation of them, is all that We desire at present, and will obviate all the Force of Dr. M's presumptive Argument from their supposed Omission of the Mention of them. It will also answer in Part his own Enquiry, " Can any Proof " be drawn from their Silence?" Their *Silence* itself, will, by his own Account, remain a *questionable* Point, till it appears for certain, that the After-Claims were groundless, and therefore till their Validity is examined, nothing can possibly be proved on their Side, from a Silence, which is not, cannot yet be proved itself. But were that Point never so clear, whatever is the Weight of this Enquiry, it is wholly applicable on our Side. " Can " any Proof be drawn from their Silence?" Does the Omission of many Particulars by *Three* of the Evangelists invalidate the express Testimony of the *Fourth* concerning them? Would the Apostolical Fathers not contradicting it, destroy the Credibility of Others who assert it, who must know the Truth of what

they asserted, had no Worldly Interest to support by this Means, and who must have been detected and brought to Shame, if They had groundlessly made such a Claim? Particularly could the *Silence* of Those, who had no particular Business or Occasion to mention miraculous Powers, be any Prejudice against the *Positive Claim* of Those, whose very Subject called them to the Mention of it, who did accordingly challenge them publicly in the Face of their Enemies, and who remarkably supported Each Other's Testimony by the Unanimity of their Claim in all Parts of the World? What Mr. T. adds of the Unreasonableness of expecting Belief without Evidence, is as applicable to every other Subject in the World, and to every other Part of this, and will occasion no Controversy between Us. We desire no One to believe *without* Evidence, but we desire strong Reasons, why We should not believe Evidence so strongly supported, as is That of the Continuance of Miracles in the Primitive Church, both by the Credibility of the Facts, and of the Witnesses.

The History of the Miracles attending St. Polycarp's Martyrdom is the next Point to be considered. Mr. T's first Observation on it is, (P. 29.) that "it stands at a great Distance off in the *Free Inquiry*." It does so, at

at a much greater than in the Course of the Argument, and this has been properly censured, as an undue Piece of Art and Management. But Mr. *T.* adds, that “it does not fall in Point of Time within the professed Design and Method of the Doctor’s Argument;” that is, the Doctor chose to limit his Observations of the *Silence* of the Primitive Writers to half a Century after the Apostles, on Purpose, I suppose, that this express Testimony might not be urged against Him. But however it ought to have been introduced before several others, which He has mentioned under this first Head; and He Himself, tho’ He deferred his choicest Observations on it, till his Reader was better prepared for them, yet thought it to his Purpose to mention this Narrative in this very Place, and to bestow a cursory Remark on it; which might well justify any Answerer in taking the Whole of what He had offered, into Consideration in this as its proper Place. I had observed, that the Doctor allows that this is “One of the most authentic and celebrated Pieces in all Primitive Antiquity,” but Mr. *T.* will not grant that this Concession can turn against Himself, for says He, “I apprehend, tho’ Dr. *M.* allows this Letter to be genuine, that is, to be really written from the Church of *Smyrna*,

“ that yet He supposes it to be written by
 “ a Collection of Men who were deceived,
 “ and concurred in giving an Account that
 “ was not true.” (P. 29.) I am glad that
 the Evasion is not, that They *intended to*
deceive, and invented the Account for the
 Honour of their Martyr; for since the
 Charge only is, that They were *deceived*,
 then the other Observation which I had be-
 fore made, comes in full to the Purpose, that
 the Miraculous Circumstances attending the
 Martyrdom were as much *Matters of Facts*,
 that fell under the *Senses* of the Spectators,
 as any Parts of the Account, and were as
 strongly attested by them.

Mr. T. proceeds to Particulars. “ The
 “ Voice from Heaven,” says He, “ Dr. M.
 “ thinks may very easily be supposed to
 “ come from One amongst the Croud, and
 “ will Any Body say that it might not? If
 a bare *Possibility* of a Fact’s being other-
 wise than it is represented to be by Those
 who were present at it, and who do not
 stand impeached of any fraudulent Design
 in the Relation, be sufficient to evade their
 positive Evidence, then no Testimony can
 confirm any Fact whatsoever. For are there
 any suspicious Circumstances either in the
 Reporters Themselves, or in this Part of
 their Report, which might strengthen the
 Suggestion

Suggestion of such a Possibility? Neither Dr. *M.* nor his Defender have laid any Thing more to their Charge than that They were *deceived*, and their Circumstances, and Doctrines, and Practices, would have been abundantly sufficient to have cleared them from any Imputation of *Guile* and *Art*, if That had been fixed on them, How then is it to be proved that they were *deceived* in their Account? Why, it seems, there was a *Possibility* of their being deceived. But what *Reason* is there to believe, that They were *actually* imposed upon in this Particular? Was there Any Thing in the *Occasion* unworthy of a Divine Interposition? Was there Any Thing in this *Manner* of interposing by a Voice from Heaven ridiculous, or new, or unsuitable to former Dispensations? Neither of These can be maintained by Any One, who agrees with Dr. *M.*'s professed Principles. Why then should We imagine, that They should make so strange a Mistake, as that of interpreting an Exclamation from One amongst the Crowd into a *Voice from Heaven*? People may in Speculation imagine almost any Thing, but would it be possible, do these Gentlemen think, that such another Mistake could happen, and that a whole Crowd, who were present at an Execution, could be imposed

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upon,

upon, by any Contrivance or Accident, to interpret a Voice from among Themselves, to come really from Heaven? When Mr. T. therefore asks, " Will Any Body say that " this Voice might not come from the " Crowd?" I answer there is a *strong Presumption* upon the first Face of the Account, and a *stronger* from the farther Consideration of the Thing, that it *might not*, and that it *could not*. The Cause, the Method, the Reason of the Thing, confirm the Credibility of the Fact, and the Nature of the Thing, confirm the Credibility of the Fact, and the Nature of the Thing, which the numerous Spectators could not All be mistaken in, secures the *Credibility* of the *Witnesses*, and obviates the Imputation of their being *deceived* in this Article. Dr. M. intimates an Objection from a Circumstance in the Account, which indeed strongly makes against Him, and excludes almost a Possibility of their Mistaking in this Particular. He first observes, that " the Voice pretended to " come from Heaven was heard only by a " Few." (P. 220.) I would desire to know on what Authority This is said. The Original affirms that the Christians then present heard the Voice, who cannot well be thought to be but a Few on such an Occasion. τὴν δὲ φωνὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων οἱ παρόντες ἤκουσαν.

ἤκουσαν. *Eusebius's* Account is more full to the Purpose, for He says expressly that *Many* heard this Voice. *Τῶν ἡμετέρων πολλοὶ ἤκουσαν.* (*Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. IV. Cap. 15.*) The *Chronicon Alexandrinum* says the same. *Τὴν δὲ φωνὴν πολλοὶ καὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἤκουσαν.* The Objection farther intended is that “ the Voice
 “ pretended to come from Heaven was heard
 “ in a Time of such Hurry in which Nothing
 “ could be heard distinctly. If such a Voice
 “ therefore had been uttered by Any One
 “ in the Crowd, as it was hardly possible to
 “ discern whence it came, so Those, whose
 “ Zeal and Imagination were particularly
 “ affected by so moving an Occasion, might
 “ easily mistake it for miraculous.” (*Free Inquiry, P. 220.*) Now this very Circumstance recorded in the Words immediately preceding the Account of the Voice, that “ there was so great a Tumult that
 “ No Body could be heard” is, I think, a strong Confirmation that this Voice, which was distinct and audible enough to reach the Ears of the many Christians present, must really have come from Heaven, and could not possibly in that Noise and Tumult have come from a private Person. The particular Mention of this *Noise* seems to have been inserted, more to obviate such an In-
 finuation,

finuation, than for any other Purpose which can well be assigned.

Mr. *T.* next embraces and defends the weakest Remark in the *Free Inquiry*, in the Attempt to account by natural Causes for the Arch formed by the Flames over the Head of St. *Polycarp*, which preserved him from being consumed by them. This has been so handsomely exposed by another Writer, that They who peruse his Remarks on it, will I believe scarce think it necessary, if it were possible, to make such a Supposition more ridiculous. (See *Jackson's* Remarks, P. 9, &c.) Mr. *T.* has added nothing new on this Point, or at least Nothing but what improves the Inconsistency. "There might probably" He says, "be something odd and uncommon in the Disposition of these Flames, which the prodigious Zeal of these Spectators that is known to be the Parent of Credulity, presently heighten'd into an Interposition from Heaven." (P. 30.) But pray consider the *Effect* of this *Something which was odd and uncommon in the Disposition of these Flames*. It was *Something*, whatever it was, that preserved the Martyr from perishing by the Flames, and obliged his Persecutors to dispatch Him in another Method. Their Zeal and their Credulity could not occasion a Mistake in this Particular.

They

They could not be *deceived* in such a Matter of Fact, but they must have told a *wilful Lie*, if there was not really a miraculous Interposition to preserve Him from the Flames. The Method of his Preservation, by the Formation of an Arch over his Head, was the most probable one that can well be thought of, and if their Zeal had not quite blinded them, was as much the Object of their Senses as the very Attempt of Burning Him; and no such Arch could possibly have been formed by natural Causes as could Answer to this Effect. Why He was preserved from this Death only to be delivered to another, is a distinct Question, not necessary now to be enlarged on, for tho' Dr. M. aimed at making an Objection of this Point, I do not find Him supported in it by Mr. T. who may therefore be presumed not to think it of any Force. But He is resolved however to defeat the Testimony of this Miracle by connecting with it the Circumstance of the *Dove*, which He thinks will hang as a Dead Weight on the Whole; and that it is an authentic Part of the Narrative, He argues from Dr. M's Observation, that "all the oldest Copies still extant, retain this Passage; which He thinks it lay upon me to have disproved." But I think that Dr. M. had Himself saved an Answerer the Trouble

Trouble of disproving this by referring to what Archbishop *Wake* and *my Father* had offered on this Point, and leaving their Arguments whole and unanswered. They had Both expressly given this Reason for rejecting it, that neither *Eusebius*, nor *Rufinus*, nor any other the most early Writers had mentioned it, who could not be supposed to have omitted so remarkable a Circumstance, if it had been reported and credited in their Time. The Insertion of it afterwards was not difficult to be accounted for, (such Additions and Interpolations having often happened in the Transcribing of Historical Accounts) but the *Omission* of it by such eminent Authors is much more than a bare Presumption against it. And since Archbishop *Ussers*, MS. is confessedly later than *Eusebius*, therefore the Dr's Argument from the oldest Copies turns against Himself; and He must expect a great Degree of Inattention in his Readers, or a great *Inclination* to his Opinion, when He could thus venture to support, by a mere positive Assertion, an Account which had been obviated by such considerable Reasons, without any Attempt of weakening or replying to those Reasons. Neither could Dr. M. be Ignorant that another *plausible* Solution at least was given of this Difficulty from a supposed

Concurrence

Concurrence of the Words in the *MS.* where the Carelessness or Mistake of the Transcriber might, thro' a small Variation or two, reduce it from a very plain and intelligible Sense to that which occasions the present Difficulty. These Things at least deserved some Notice, and are of more Weight than a magisterial Determination, that "all the oldest Copies still extant, from which Archbishop *Usher* and other Learned Men published their several Editions, retain this Passage." These *All* prove upon Examination to be but *One* only, from which the Other copied, and so a single Error might easily be spread into future Editions; but if there were more still extant which retained this Passage, yet if Those, who saw the earliest Accounts, not now extant, have not retained it, may not this pass as a very probable Argument at least, that there was no such Passage in the Original Accounts, but that it was a Mistake some way or other crept into the later Copies of it? For a full Account of this I shall refer to Dr. *Smith's* Note on this Passage, which I presume Dr. *M.* could not but have seen, from whom I shall only cite this Sentence to balance the Opinion and Authority of Dr. *M.* "Quod nulli fundamento innititur, & plane incertissimum est, vetustis

“ vetustis five Græcis, five Latinis omnino
 “ obmutescantibus, nullâq. Traditione, ne
 “ levissimâ quidem, de hoc Portento apud
 “ illos servatâ.”

Mr. *T.* thinks that the other Circumstance of the *vast Effusion of Blood* is little less incredible than that of the *Dove*, and is a Difficulty that wants a Solution. But as the Fire is represented to be so near extinguished already, that the Persecutors saw there was no farther Prospect of *Polycarp's* being consumed by it, and that the Executioner could without Danger go close to Him to stab Him; and as Old Men as well as Others are sometimes apt to be *Plethorick*, (of which there are some remarkable Instances in the *English* History) there seems no Improbability, without the Supposition of a Miracle, but that a great Stream of Blood issuing from the Wound, and falling exactly upon the little Remains of Fire, might easily extinguish them. That the Veins of the Martyr should in his old Age be so plentifully supplied, and that the Effusion of his Blood should fall directly on the Flames intended to consume Him, might seem *Providential*, tho' not *supernatural*, and might well occasion that Notice which the History tells Us it did, as distinguishing the Sufferings of the Faithful. Had Mr. *T.*
 looked

looked a little farther into this Matter, He might possibly have found some reasonable Solution of his Difficulties, might have distinguished the Genuine *original* Account from the *Additions* to it, or *Misrepresentations* of it, and might not have been left so remediless, as he represents Himself. “ So that “ I see,” says He, “ no Remedy, but We “ must shut our Eyes, and swallow all in “ a Lump together; No Objection can arise “ against the *Credibility* of the *Attesters* “ from the *Incredibility* of the Things at- “ tested. This is the Doctrine laid down “ for Us to go by, and perhaps ’tis well “ for Those, who can thus *believe* in the “ Gross.” (P. 31, 32.) What Mr. T. intended by this last Sentence, He best knows: If it was meant as a Reflection on me, as it must be, to make it pertinent, I hope that I have given little Occasion for so unhand- some an Insinuation. I have elsewhere endeavoured to ascertain the Nature and Ex- tent of a *Rational Faith*, and to guard it carefully against the Extremes of Supersti- tion and Unbelief. And tho’ ’tis as well, and better, for Those who can *believe in the Gross*, as for Those who can *disbelieve in the Gross*, and undermine the Foundation of all Faith, yet have I never attempted to exclude our *Reason* from its proper Share in every

every such Enquiry; but only desire to add this Caution, that *our Reason* is not the *Reason of God*, nor have We his *infinite Wisdom* to judge of all his all-wise Proceedings.

Mr. T. adds that “ if this Miracle was
 “ fairly made out to be true in all its Cir-
 “ cumstances, yet it would prove Nothing
 “ against the *Free Inquiry*.” Dr. M’s Posi-
 tion, He says, is, “ that God Almighty did
 “ not continue to work Miracles by the
 “ Agency or Instrumentality of Man; that
 “ He ceased to invest Men with any such
 “ standing Powers, as He had done in
 “ the Days of the Apostles; but that it by no
 “ Means follows from hence, that He might
 “ not suspend or reverse the Laws of Na-
 “ ture upon any Occasion, that in his Wis-
 “ dom He should think worthy of it.”
 (P. 33.) Whether Dr. M. will approve of
 this Part of the Defence, or accept of this
 Distinction pointed out in his Favour, I
 cannot tell; but I rather conjecture that He
 will not; because his Title-Page, and the
 whole Course of his ensuing Arguments,
 seem plainly levelled against *all* miraculous
 Interpositions whatsoever. Besides, Mr. T.
 says the Distinction is *very obvious*, and
 therefore I cannot think, that it could have
 escaped the Dr. Himself, if He had intended
 it; or that He would have wasted his own
 Time,

Time, and put his Answerers into a wrong Method, by arguing Himself against the Truth of such Reports, as had, it seems, no Relation to the Question in Dispute. But whether Dr. *M.* will now adopt this Distinction or not, the Impartial will judge what is the Foundation or Force of it. If God Almighty thought fit to continue any supernatural Interpositions in the Church, for the Reasons before assigned by Dr. *M.* of over-ruling the Prejudices of Gainsayers, or of supporting the Minds of Believers, it will be hard to assign a Reason, why the Agency and Instrumentality of *Men Themselves* should at that Interval be laid aside, and more *immediate* Interpositions of the *Deity* be continued; when, according to our best Judgment, these in Conjunction would best answer the Purpose, and were thus given in Conjunction by God Himself in the preceding Ages. I will readily allow, that God Almighty might have good Reasons to suppress the One and continue the Other, which We may not discern; but it concerns Those, who expect to account for Every Thing by their Reason, to point out some Difference, and if They examine never so critically the Cause, the Credibility, the Effects, or any other Circumstance of the Divine Interposition by *Himself*, rather than by his *Creatures*, no Advantage

will arise to their Cause by the Comparifon. Those who pretend not to direct their Marker, can form no better Judgment of fuch Cafes than by *Analogy*, by Observations on the Proceedings of infinite Wisdom in parallel Cafes, and this will lead us to believe that if he continued to favour his Church in thofe After-Ages, with fuch diftinguifhed Care, as Himfelf to fufpend or reverse the Laws of Nature on their Behalf on fome important Occafons, He did likewise Favour the Perfons Themfelves with fupernatural Endowments on fuch like momentous Exigences. The Reason is, that heretofore both under the Old and New Testament, We find thefe particular Favours granted *together*, and We can point out no particular Reason why they fhould be feparated at the Time We are fpeaking of. This Kind of Argument is ufed by Mr. T. Himfelf, where He thought it of Service to his Cause, and it is particularly applicable to the prefent Cafe.

“ This was the Method that God Almighty
 “ proceeded in with Refpect to the Mira-
 “ cles of the Gofpel-Age, and may We
 “ not conjecture with fome Shew of Pro-
 “ bability, that fo long as He faw it con-
 “ venient to continue thefe Powers, Some-
 “ thing of the fame Method had been
 “ continued alfo.” (P. 15.) By this Way of Reasoning every Evidence of his having in-
 terpoſed

terposed by *Himself*, will be a presumptive Proof of his continuing so long to interpose likewise by the *Instrumentality* of Human Agents; and therefore to Mr. T's Question, *what* the Proof of such a Miracle wrought immediately by Heaven *would prove against the Free-Inquiry?* I answer directly, it will prove, against that Author's Opinion, that Christianity was not yet so well established, as to be left to make its Way merely by its own Reasonableness; and will obviate every other Objection against the *Necessity*, or the *Expediency* of the Continuance of Miraculous Powers.

Mr. T. after a Recapitulation, which I shall readily leave to the Perusal and Judgment of the Reader, proceeds to what I had farther observed on the supposed *Silence* of the Apostolical Writers as to this Point. Dr. M. thought that their not insisting upon miraculous Endowments was a presumptive Argument that They were not favoured with them; I observed on the other Hand, that there were not only good Reasons to be assigned, why They might not mention them in those epistolary Writings, tho' They were endowed with them; but that this very Circumstance was a strong Presumption, that these miraculous Gifts were continued to them; otherwise their *Silence* on so important an Alteration in their

Circumstances, as the Withdrawing of those Gifts would occasion, was not to be accounted for. I added the Reasons, that our Saviour's Promise was not limited in any such Manner as to confine it to the Persons or Times of the Apostles; that in Fact these supernatural Gifts were plentifully bestowed on common Believers, just before *they* wrote; that the *Occasion* and even *Necessity* for them *continued* or rather *increased* under the Persecutions arising in the next Age; that it was natural for Them in the same Circumstances to expect the same Assistance, and that They could not well have avoided taking Notice of the great Difference in this Respect, if They had been disappointed in their Expectations; especially as They were writing in a *practical* Manner to Those, who were now to endure greater Hardships with the Prospect of less Supports. Mr. T's Reply is, that "this
 " Argument seems to Him to fail in its
 " first Principle; He thinks I have not
 " made it sufficiently appear, that They
 " must have entertained any such Expectation; nor can He consider any Thing
 " that is said either by Christ or his Apostles, as sufficient to ground such a Con-
 " jecture upon." (P. 35.) But I suppose that the Reader expected his *Argument*, and
 not

not his *Opinion*, otherwise according to this Method of answering, a positive Assertion that any Book is nothing to the Purpose, may be called a *Reply*. It became Mr. T. in this Place to shew, either that the *Words* of our Saviour's Promise *limited* the Expectation of these extraordinary Gifts to the Times of the Apostles, or that the *Occasion* for such Expectation *ceased*, and that the Circumstances of their immediate Successors being *different* did of Course limit the Promise, and cut off all Prospect of supernatural Assistance. If any such Alteration to their Advantage could be proved, so as to supersede the Use of Miracles, the Intent of the Promise might well be thought to be already fulfilled, and that it was confined by the Use and Design, tho' not by the Phrase of it. But the Case in Fact was directly otherwise. Persecutions grew more *frequent*, and more *severe*, and the Assistance of these supernatural Gifts was at least as much wanted, when these Writers penned their Epistles, as when St. *Paul* wrote his. They had seen the Completion of our Saviour's Promise in all the several Instances referred to it, and They had seen the Use and Effect of it, in the Support of Believers, and the Conversion of several of their Adversaries. They saw and experienced that the same

Reasons still subsisted for their Continuance, and therefore They could not but expect them in that Situation, till the *Event* proved otherwise, and some Interruption of them at least prevented the Hopes of Their Revival. And therefore tho' Mr. T. says, " He " does not see but We have as good a " Pretence to infer from hence a Right to " these Powers, as they had," Others, I presume, will think these Considerations of some Weight; and that tho' We, who have not such Occasion for supernatural Assistance, and who live after a long Interval in which We know it has been withdrawn, cannot claim it from our Saviour's general Promise; yet that those Apostolical Writers, who were in the very same Situation with Those to whom the Promise was first made, and who had seen them last down to their own Times, could not but expect the Continuance of them in their Days. If they really continued, They had no particular Occasion to take Notice of it in their practical Writings; but if they ceased, Those Writers had an especial Call to mention such an eminent Failure of their Hopes, and to introduce it as an Argument, why They should lay still more Stress on their only remaining Ornaments and Recommendations, their Piety and Virtue.

But

But Mr. T. says, “ I look upon it, that
 “ the Event of their *Ceasing* might be no
 “ more extraordinary to Them, than it
 “ must be thought to appear to Those, who
 “ lived at the Time that they actually did
 “ cease, whenever that was, and who yet
 “ have not expressed any particular Surprise
 “ at it.” (*ibid.*) As it happens this Gentle-
 man is mistaken both in the *Reason* and
 the *Fact*. The Event of the Ceasing of
 Miraculous Gifts must have been much
 more extraordinary and surprising, if it
 happened, whilst the same, or greater Per-
 secutions raged, as when they were first gi-
 ven, than if they ceased after the Ceasing of
 all Persecutions, when Christianity was pro-
 tected and encouraged by the Civil Power.
 If this Event happened, as it is supposed to
 do, at this Period, then Wise Men might
 see the *Design* of this Dispensation in the
Date of it, and might discern the Wis-
 dom and Goodness of Providence in conti-
 nuing them so long as the Powers of the
 Earth continued to oppose the blessed Gos-
 pel, and in withdrawing them, when *Hu-
 man Supports* might well seem sufficient. Yet
 it appears, that the *Inattentive* sometimes
 stood in Need to be reminded of this plain
 Distinction, and their Surprise, both con-
 ceived and expressed, at the Ceasing of these

miraculous Powers in the Church, after so long an Enjoyment of them, gave Occasion to several Writers to treat of this Subject, and to point to the Difference already taken Notice of, amongst some other Reasons which They assign for this Event.

I will pass over Mr. T's Triumph and Congratulations to Himself on what He has performed on this Head, and pass on to what He next seemed to intend as an Argument. Tho' Dr. M. had Himself ranked *Visions* and *Prophetical Gifts* amongst the other *supernatural* Powers, which He proposed to shew had ceased in the Church with the Apostles, yet being well aware what Evidence might be brought against Him on this Point, He endeavours to obviate it by saying, that " if it should appear probable
 " to Any that They were favoured on some
 " Occasions with extraordinary Illuminati-
 " ons, Visions, or Divine Impressions, yet
 " that Gifts of this Sort were merely *personal*,
 " granted for their particular Comfort, and
 " reaching no farther than Themselves." I observed that such an Evasion was as applicable to any other Kind of Endowments as these, and was indeed of Force in None; for that all such Gifts were both Acts of *Mercy*, and Arguments of *Authority*, and therefore unless He could disprove the Historical Account
 of

of such supernatural Illuminations, These would be of Force against his Main Question. I instanced in the History of the Predictions of St. *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*, as cited by Archbishop *Wake*, and observed that if it be *real*, (plainly referring to Dr. *M*'s own Intimation, that there were some such Instances, and that it might appear probable to Some Persons, that there were extraordinary Illuminations, Visions, and Divine Impressions continued in the Church) then They might be both a Support to them, and an Evidence to Others of the Truth of what They taught. As He had not disproved, as He seemed to admit, that such an History might probably be thought real, I observed that if it was, his other Evasion would be of no Service; and thus I argued on a Concession, which Truth had almost extorted from Him involuntarily; and the Manner in which I expressed Myself, was not owing, as Mr. *T*. interprets it, to my *Diffidence* of the Truth of those Facts, but to the *Manner* in which Dr. *M*. Himself has stated the Case; as the least attentive Reader could not but have observed.

As to the extraordinary Illuminations granted to *Ignatius*, the Archbishop referred to two Proofs of it, his Foresight of the Divisions, which actually happened amongst
the

the *Philadelphians*, to whom He had given Notice of, and Caution against them; and his immediate Knowledge, *by the Spirit*, of those Strangers, who came to meet Him just before his Martyrdom. Mr. T. only observes, that “ if I, or any other Person
 “ will put it past Doubt that these Words,
 “ *Do Nothing without your Bishop*, were
 “ dictated to *Ignatius* by the Spirit of God,
 “ it will be doing a signal Piece of Service in the Controversy between Us and
 “ the Presbyterians.” (P. 37.) This again is most unaccountably confused and foreign to the Point. The *Prediction* which the Archbishop referred to in this Passage, had Nothing to do with the Form of Church Government established amongst them, but to the Divisions and Confusions, which were coming on amongst them. They did not want a *Prophecy* to tell them, that *Episcopacy* was the right Institution, which They knew was already settled and universally submitted to; but having a Fore-Knowledge, that Dissentions and Troubles were coming on, the natural Dictate of the Spirit, without an immediate Revelation on the Occasion, would be this, as represented by *Ignatius*; “ Do Nothing without
 “ your Bishop: Keep your Bodies as the
 “ Temples of God: Love Unity: Flee Divisions;
 “ visions;

“visions: Be ye Followers of Christ, as He
 “was of the Father.” This was not the
 Sentence referred to by the Archbishop as
 the Proof of an extraordinary Illumination,
 but the *Forefight* of the Event, which made
 this Advice necessary, was the Point, which
 shewed some higher Assistance. The Ad-
 vice itself was no more than might be col-
 lected from the Dictate of the Spirit, as re-
 corded in the sacred Writings, and explain-
 ed by the universal Establishment of Epis-
 copacy in all Places; and so I find it un-
 derstood by those, who have commented
 upon this Passage. It does by no Means
 follow, that because any Person was favour-
 ed with a Prophetical Impulse in *one* In-
 stance, that therefore He had the same ex-
 traordinary Assistance in *every Thing*, or that
 He could not speak a Word on such an
 Occasion, but by immediate Inspiration. St.
Paul distinguishes very often, in his Epis-
 tles, betwixt direct Suggestions of the Holy
 Spirit, and those Counsels which proceed
 from stated Precepts, under the common
 habitual Influences of the same Divine Guide,
 and takes Care that They should not mis-
 take every *prudential* Rule which He gave
 them, for the *immediate* Dictate of *Inspira-
 tion*. In like Manner the Primitive Wri-
 ters, under a due Sense of the Necessity of
 Divine

Divine Grace to help them, frequently make Mention of the Assistance and Guidance of the Holy Spirit, where They did not mean to speak of *supernatural* Assistance, or extraordinary Illuminations. Thus *Ignatius* may very reasonably be understood to represent the scriptural Holy Advice, which He gave them, as the *Dictate of the Spirit*, which will prove a sufficient Testimony to the Honour and Authority of *Episcopacy*, and will shew it to be, as I am firmly perswaded it is, of *Apostolical*, if not strictly of *Divine* Institution. If it be still thought, that the Original Phrase must be understood of an *immediate Inspiration*, I see no Absurdity in the Consequence, nor any Thing, in the Advice given, unworthy of such a Divine Author.

“ As to *Polycarp's* foretelling his Death,” Mr. *T.* says, that Dr. *M.* very justly observes, “ that the Foresight of such an Event, in “ the Time of cruel Persecution, might be “ no Proof of a Prophetick Spirit.” But the *Time* at which He delivered this Prediction, the *Manner* in which He spake of it to Those about Him, the particular *Kind* of Death, which he described, and the Completion of it, shew that this Foresight could not be the Effect of *common Prudence* from the Circumstances which He was in, as Dr. *M.*

M. represents it. He interrupted his Devotions at such a solemn Season to mention it as something *extraordinary*, and no Reason can be given, why from his Situation He should think particularly of being *burnt alive*, rather than of being *thrown to the Beasts*; or why He should fix on any One Kind of Death, and leave it in the Power of Events to hurt his Reputation, if his Conjecture was only founded on the Probability of his losing his Life in so cruel a Persecution. The farther Testimony of the Writers of this Circular Letter, that he was a “truly Apostolical and Prophetical Teacher, and that Every Word that went out of his Mouth either had then been already fulfilled, or would in its due Time be accomplished,” is a Confirmation of this particular Prophecy; and tho’ Mr. *T.* here again introduces the old Objection, without strengthening it, that “the whole Account of the Vision stands upon the same Footing with that of the Pigeon,” yet others will probably be satisfied by this Time, that This is a *Misrepresentation*, and that these two Circumstances are supported by very different Authorities.

I will follow Mr. *T.*’s Example in this Place, to avoid Repetition, and pass over Dr. *M.*’s Remark on the Improbability of the
Revival

Revival of these Gifts, after they are supposed to have ceased; leaving the Proof of that Supposition, and the Argument concerning the *Silence* of the Apostolical Writers, to depend on what has been already offered. Dr. *M*'s next Remark was on the *Manner* of exerting these miraculous Gifts, which He thought the more suspicious in the Days after the Apostles, because then the Workers of them called on Others to come, and see, and examine them, which was a more *ostentatious* Method than Any that the Apostles used. I observed in Answer, that it was strange to interpret an Offer of publick Examination to be an Air of Imposture. A Readiness and Desire that All should look into the Foundations of any Pretensions, is a *presumptive* Argument of their Truth, that they will indeed bear Examination; and the Want of this is as readily presumed to be owing to a Consciousness that they will not stand the Test, as We argue in the Case of the Church of *Rome*. I observed farther, that if the Difference mentioned between the Miracles of the Apostles, and of their Successors, had lain directly otherwise, Dr. *M*. would have known how to have turned that Consideration to the Service of his own Cause. Mr. *T*. has here again made a Shift to misunderstand me,

me, (which was, I think, no easy Matter) and has intimated, as if I thought that Dr. M. would upon that State of the Case have objected to the Apostles Themselves, Whereas that Question was out of my Thoughts at that Time. Dr. M. I knew, was so good a Master of Argument, as not to have omitted to make the best of so material a Circumstance in his Favour, as that State of the Case would have afforded Him. He who professes to believe the Miracles of the Apostles, and to reject those of their Successors, would not have failed to have triumphed in this Difference between them; if the former had, before they worked their Miracles, called on their Enemies and Persecutors to come and examine them, and the latter had only recorded them, *after* the Performance of them, without such previous Challenge and Invitation. “How plausibly,” said I, “would this Gentleman have declaimed upon this Representation?” My Meaning plainly was, that He would in that Case have urged, that the Successors not following such a Pattern betrayed a Consciousness that They had not the same real Power; and then I doubt not but He would have enlarged on the Importance, not only of *admitting*, but of *inviting* Enquiries and Examinations, where Truth and Evidence
can

can support the Cause. Then He would, with the Rest of Mankind, have thought it of great Weight, in Respect of the Evidence, that such Notice should be given beforehand, as might prepare all Men thoroughly to examine and sift the Cause, and thereby prevent any Evasions afterwards. Mr. T. is pleased here to say, that “ I have entirely “ misapprehended the Grounds of the Fact “ the Dr. has referred to, which He now “ represents to be, as if the Objection was, “ that they are not punctually recorded.” This Circumstance is indeed *incidentally* mentioned, but the plain View of the Dr’s Exception in this Place was, the *ostentatious* Method, as He esteems it, of proclaiming their Powers, and offering to exert them, whenever They should be called on. Whether Mr. T. found this too hard a Point to maintain, whether He was at a Loss for a proper *Medium*, to prove an Offer of Examination to be a Mark of Imposture, and therefore chose to wave it, and to carry our View to another Point, I shall leave the attentive Reader to determine. The Article of punctually recording the Gospel-Miracles has been already mentioned, and is allowed to be a Circumstance of peculiar Advantage to their Credibility, and had they been wrought after such previous Challenges
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and Invitations, and the succeeding ones had been more private and concealed, this would justly have been esteemed another peculiar Advantage in their Favour. But because this Circumstance happened to lie on the Side of After-Ages, who having seen the Evasions of the Evidence of former Miracles, and being willing to prevent them, did therefore call on the Magistrates and People, being then their Enemies, to come and see, and bear Witness to their supernatural Works, therefore This was in some Method or other to be evaded, and even Dr. *M*'s Eloquence proved unequal to the arduous Task. For We desire to lay aside the Pomp of Words, and demand a plain Reason, why a Challenge to Adversaries to look into their Claim of supernatural Gifts should be thought a Presumption against them. Why, says Mr. *T*. "Miracles speak for Themselves; They need no round-about-Way of recommending them; They go immediately to the Senses of Mankind without any formal Process of Words." (P. 41, 42.) But what avails all this to Those, who are not *Witnesses* to those Miracles? The Intent of their publick Calls to their Persecutors to see their mighty Works, was to gain the Opportunity of working them in their Presence. It was easy to despise *Reports*, and

to evade even those, which were well-attested, upon the general Presumptions which ingenious Men can find out against the Credibility of supernatural Interpositions; but when They were told, that the Miracles, which They had heard of, should readily be repeated before Themselves, This was a proper Call on their Attention, and was more likely to end in their Conviction, if such Claims were well founded; or in the Confusion of the Claimants, if they were not. On this Account I observed, that “ the Successors of the Apostles often found it more convincing to *lay Claim* to Divine Assistance, and then to work their Miracles in Confirmation of their Claim.” Upon which Mr. *T.* rejoins, “ more convincing than what pray? What is the other Branch of the Comparison? More convincing than the Method made Use of by our Saviour and his Apostles? This, if you please, may be deemed Harangue and Declamation, to say no worse of it.” And then goes on to talk about God Almighty’s changing his Method of Proceeding; which has as much Relation to any other Part of my Book, or to any other Book, as to this Passage.

I would observe in the first Place, that to render this Comparison invidious, Mr. *T.* has

has been pleased to introduce the Mention of the Method made Use of by our Saviour, of which I had not said or intimated the least Thought. Indeed our Blessed Lord, in the most eminent of his Miracles, that of his own *Resurrection*, made Use of the very Method that We are speaking of, as practised by the Successors of the Apostles. He gave publick Notice of it before-hand, that the Adversaries of his Person and Cause might look into the Truth of it, and might endeavour, if they could, to prevent it. His Predictions of this were so clear and frequent, that his Enemies understood and remembered it, and took effectual Care not to be imposed upon in this Article. The Event shewed the Reason of this previous Mention and Publication of it, as contributing to the clearer Establishment of the Evidence and Belief of this glorious Article. For tho' the After-Attestation of our Saviour's Resurrection by his Disciples would have been conclusive and satisfactory, yet were not all Evasions more effectually cut off by this early Declaration of it to his Adversaries, their careful Endeavours to prevent any Fraud or Imposture in this Affair, and the greater Security thence arising of the Reality of that glorious Event? If these Gentlemen will apply their Reasonings concerning Miracles

speaking for themselves, &c. without previous Declarations of them; to this Instance, it might well “ be deemed Harangue and De-
 “ clamation, to say no worse of it;” and by the Impropriety and Absurdity of it in this Instance, it may well appear to be of no Force, nay to be of some Advantage, where the *Reality* of the Fact appears by the *Event* to have been well supported. Why the Apostles did not follow this Pattern, and declare before-hand what Miracles They were ready to perform, why our Blessed Saviour did not, in other Instances, challenge them to see what *supernatural* Power He was about to exert, may reasonably be presumed to be, because the Cases and Persons with whom They had then to do, did not require it. The People, amongst whom They resided, had frequent Occasion of seeing their miraculous Works, and attended them with that Expectation. These needed no such publick Call, and the Apostles wrote no Apologies to Emperors, or Rulers at a Distance from them, where such Claims and Challenges might properly have been expected. But their Successors had great Occasion to make such Claim *publick*, that the Heathen Governors, who now thought this growing Religion worthy their Notice and Censure, and began to aim at suppressing it by Persecution,

secution, might be informed what sure Credentials They had to shew for their Commission, and might be assured that They were ready to make good in their Presence such Claims to miraculous Powers, as must be owned to be given by God. In the Writings of Persons *so circumstanced*, We might well expect to find such Pretensions *publickly* avowed, and here We do find them; and What Kind of Objection is it to Them, that their Predecessors, who were *differently* situated, worked their Miracles without exhibiting in Writing a prefatory Claim to them? St. *Paul* in those Epistles, wherein He speaks of these miraculous Powers, speaks of the *prudent* Use of them, and directs that these, as well as other Talents, should be so used, as might be most edifying to the Church. They followed the Direction, and This was the Fact that I was speaking of, that as Times and Circumstances varied, They conformed to their Situation, and still used their miraculous Gifts in the Method that might be most convincing to Those whom They were concerned with. If They thought that the Miracles of their Predecessors had not *reached the Ears* of the Rulers, or were esteemed by them as *uncertain* Reports, what properer Method could They take, than to publish an open and free Ac-

count of their own supernatural Endowments, and that They were both able and willing to repeat the same for the Satisfaction of the Greatest or the Least that would attend them? If They found them evading the Force of such former Miracles by those Objections, which We sometimes read of, as that they were *done in private*, and *shunned the Light*, how could They more effectually obviate such Cavils, than by proclaiming publickly their miraculous Gifts, “ which they were ready to exhibit before
 “ the Eyes of their Opposers, on all Occa-
 “ sions, at any Warning, and in all Places
 “ whenever They thought fit?” In this Case there was no *Alteration* in the Scheme and Method of Providence, as Mr. T. represents it, but there was a wise and prudent Accommodation of these Gifts by Those, who were entrusted with them, so as to render them most *effectual* to the Propagation and Support of Christianity. Mr. T. adds, “ Up-
 “ on Mr. D’s Representation it was necessary
 “ to *claim* the Power, in order to convince
 “ the World They really possessed it;
 “ whereas, says He, in my humble Con-
 “ ception, Whoever uses the Power, makes
 “ a previous verbal Claim to it altogether un-
 “ necessary.” (P. 42.) Mr. D’s Representation not only did not imply the Charge laid
 to

to it, but exprefly excluded it; for I had faid in thefe plain and determinate Words, “ Either Method would be fufficient for “ the Satisfaction of a reasonable Inquirer, “ but certainly the latter was lefs liable to “ Evasion:” and I fee no Reason to alter my Opinion in this Point.

Mr. *T.* proceeds next to fubjoin his Sentiments upon another Point, where his Obfervations, as far as they are true, are of more Weight againft Dr. *M.* than againft me. The Dr. had urged that “ the Chriftians “ of thofe Times in the Performance of “ their Miracles were always charged with “ Fraud and Impofture by their Adverfaries.” This I obferved was very *confiftent* in thofe Adverfaries, who extended the Objection even to the Miracles of Chrift and his Apoftles; but that the *Charge* of Impofture by *Enemies* would fcarce be thought to prove the *Reality* of Impofture. Mr. *T.* thinks that in this Cafe it may, and infifts on the great Characters of the Objectors, who could not, in his Opinion, be fo ftupid, and fenfelefs, and fhamelefs, as to put the Ifsue of their Caufe upon the Truth or Falfehood of an Event that was fo eafily to be decided againft them. As to the *Reasonablenefs* of the Conduct of obftinate Unbelievers, ancient or modern, it is more than I

shall undertake at present to account for; We have seen them in all Ages resist Evidence, which was next to irresistible, and I cannot attempt to prove, that They acted reasonably herein, because I am much otherwise persuaded. But I apprehend that the Argument here made Use of, will hold with much greater Force on the other Side. The Single Point agreed on betwixt Dr. *M.* and his Advocates, and Those who have wrote against Him, is that such Pretensions were made by the Primitive Christians openly and universally, at all Times, and before all Persons. Now could *These* have acted so stupid, senseless, and shameless a Part, as to put the Issue of their Cause upon an Event, that was so easily to be decided against them? The Point, as Mr. *T.* observes, might be demonstrated on the Evidence of their own Senses: Whether it was true or false, it might be brought to a clear and speedy Conclusion; and so far the Friends and Enemies of the Christians Cause were on a Level, and this Argument seems equally favourable to both Parties.

To balance therefore and decide the Question, We must enquire farther, on which Side the greater Prejudices and Interest lay, and what was the Event of this Competition betwixt such Claimants and their Opponents.

ponents. *Folly and Effrontery*---We will allow there must be somewhere, and the Circumstances of the Case will sufficiently shew where they are chargeable. The *Heathen Philosophers* had all the Prepossession of Education, and all the Pride and Esteem acquired by their Science, besides the common Temptations of the Power, and Profit, and Honour of the World, to influence them against the Pretensions of Those who laid Claim to Miraculous Powers. The Principal of these *Christian Claimants* had been in the very same Situation Themselves, had overcome these Prejudices thro' the mere Love of Truth and Force of Evidence, and had undertaken a new Religion upon Conviction, which promised them Nothing but Persecutions, and Tortures, and Death. They had no worldly Interest to serve by making this Claim, but They might have made very great Advantage by renouncing it, by going over to their Adversaries and detecting the Fraud of their Brethren. They became *Converts* to the Gospel, and challenged the Power of working Miracles in their *Master's Name*, when that *Name* was made a Term of Reproach, and They could expect to profess it on no other Condition, than that of sacrificing every Comfort in Life, and most probably their Life itself, in
his

his Service. And is it credible, that They could thus give up every reasonable and desirable Prospect both in this World, and in the next, to maintain what They knew to be a gross Fraud and Imposture? This then is *one* material *Difference* between Those, who *rejected*, and Those who *maintained* these Pretensions, that the Former had great *Prepossessions* and *Interests* to blind their Eyes against the Evidence offered; the Latter had no Reason in the World to tempt them to Disguise and Falsification, but it would have answered the great Points of Security and Prosperity, both here and hereafter, to have owned the Truth, and not to have charged their Consciences with so heavy a Guilt, as that of making Pretensions to extraordinary Gifts from Heaven, which They knew They were not favoured with.

Again, The *Event* of this Dispute may well be thought to depend on the *Evidence* of it. The Heathens charged the Christians with *Fraud* and *Imposture*, and if They could have made good the Charge, would infallibly have prevented their Progress; for They had already every other Discouragement against them, and had Nothing to be hoped for, but from the *Evidence* which They offered. Yet in this Situation *Heathenism*

thenism daily decayed, and the *Gospel* gained Ground; The Professors of the Former fell into that Neglect and Contempt which Persons usually do, who advance Charges that They cannot make good; whilst the Latter had all the Success that could be expected from the clearest Verification of their Pretensions. And This appears to be *another* Circumstance of Weight to shew on which Side the *Folly and Effrontery* were to be charged.

If it be thought, that the *Success* of the Gospel was owing to *other* Evidence, as particularly to the Testimony concerning those real Miracles, which were wrought by *Christ* and *his Apostles*, I shall observe with Mr. T. that there was more Room to cavil at such Testimony, with Respect to the Transactions of a *past* Age, than there could be with Respect to Those Miracles, which they had such Opportunities of being *Eye-Witnesses* of Themselves. Had the succeeding Christians claimed the Continuance of these miraculous Gifts without Foundation, They could not have done a greater Prejudice to the Evidence arising from the real Miracles of their Predecessors; for Those Adversaries, who could have *disproved* the *latter*, which were offered in the same Cause, would have *presumed* the
same

same of the *former*, and thought them unworthy of their Notice.

A late learned Writer has given this Solution to the Difficulty raised by Mr. T. and has offered this as the *Hypothesis*, why the Wiser Heathens rejected the Account of *all* Miracles wrought as well by the earliest as the later Christians, namely, because They looked on all Miracles as *incredible*, as *Frauds of Course*, and therefore did not think that any Pretensions whatsoever deserved the least Attention. If this were the Case, Mr. T. may see a Reason, why Persons of the highest Characters among them, might lay the Charge of Fraud upon the Christians, without being guilty of such *egregious Folly* as He speaks of. For according to this Representation, They did not “ put the Issue “ of their Cause upon the Truth or Falshood “ of an Event that was so easily to be decided against them,” but They *refused to join Issue* at all upon this Point. They rejected their Miracles, and charged them with Fraud, not thro’ the Objection of any *particular Insufficiency* in their Evidence, but thro’ this Opinion, that *no Evidence* whatsoever could prove a Miracle. For my own Part I do not think that any such *general* Account can be given of all the Philosophers. They differed like other Persons, and opposed
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the Miracles wrought in Favour of the Gospel, Some on one Principle and Some on Another. Some thought *no Miracles* could be proved at all; Others thought that no Miracles could prove such *Doctrines* as those of the *Incarnation* and *Cross*; and therefore agreed in rejecting the Pretensions of the Christians, tho' on very *different* Grounds. Very probably the forementioned Representation may hold with Respect to *many*, or perhaps the *greater Part* of the Philosophers; but I think there is plain Evidence, from the Accounts given by the Primitive Christians of the Objections made against them, that it did not hold with Respect to *All*. But whether They thought *Miracles* absolutely *incredible*, or not, yet if, whilst They had the Power and Authority on their Side, They could have disproved the Pretensions of Those, who had offered them in *their Days*, they would of Course have rejected the Accounts of the *former* Times, and spared Themselves the Trouble of looking into them at all. The Success therefore of Christianity, whilst these Pretensions continued, and whilst its Professors lay under so many other Disadvantages, which Nothing but clear Evidence could have overcome, is with me a strong Argument, that they were proved to be *real* to Those, who, in
Opposition

Opposition to their Interest, became Converts to them.

“ But after all,” says Mr. T. “ is it undeniably certain, that these Opposers of Christianity did charge the Miracles of our Saviour and his Apostles with Fraud and Imposture? Is Mr. D. (He should have said is Dr. M.) confident, this Question may not be answered in the Negative?” Here He has deserted his Client, and come over to me, thro’ a vehement Desire of opposing me in every Thing. It is to be considered then, that tho’ these Gentlemen have made the Distinction, and laid great Stress on it, between the Miracles wrought by our Saviour and his Apostles, and those which were wrought by their immediate Successors, yet the Enemies of the Gospel at that Time had not found out this Distinction, but by denying the *Miracles of Christians*, meant to deny all that were wrought in that Cause; or by admitting and *evading* them, meant to extend that *Evasion* to *present* as well as *former* Pretensions. Whatever Instances therefore may be offered of their attempting to account for such Miracles by Art, Magick, and the like, are so many Arguments against Dr. M. that the Objectors did not *always* charge them with *Fraud* and *Imposture*, as He has asserted.

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To this Purpose I observed, that tho' Those, who would not own the Doctrines of Christianity, must have been *self-condemned*, if They had not denied the Miracles, (plainly meaning unless They had some other Evasion) yet that " They did not think fit to trust
 " their Cause on this Point : For tho' They
 " sometimes threw in such Hints as these
 " yet that at other Times They shifted the
 " Objection, and chose rather to suppose,
 " that their Miracles were wrought by the
 " Assistance of *Demons*." To this Mr. T. says, " If Mr. D. had made it fairly appear, that the Persons We are speaking of,
 " imputed the Miracles that were pretended to be wrought in their own Times
 " to any such Power, This indeed would
 " have been something to his Purpose ; and
 " I should have been obliged to Him for the
 " Information, but the Point is only intimated, and not one Word said in Proof
 " of it." (P. 45.) As I was writing against Dr. M. whose intimate Acquaintance with the Primitive Writers could not fail of furnishing Him with many Proofs of it, I thought it proper to *remind* Him of this Circumstance, without thinking it necessary to point to all the Instances of it ; not foreseeing that this would be made an Objection by One, who was unacquainted with them.

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Very exprefs is that almoft in the Entrance of *Origen's* Difcourfe againft *Celfus*: Μετὰ τὰυτα ἐκδίδα πόθεν κινέμεν ὁ Κέλσος φησὶ, δαιμόνων τινῶν ὀνόμασι καὶ κατακλήσει δοκεῖν ἰχϋεῖν χριςτιανός· ὡς οἶμαι, ἀνισσόμεν τὰ περὶ τῶν κατεπαδόντων τῆς δαίμονας καὶ ἐξελαυνόντων· (*Orig. cont. Celf. P. 324. Ben. Ed.*) *Eusebius's* Citation from *Porphyrus* amounts to a full Testimony of the fame, that Christians had a Power over Evil Spirits. Περί δὲ τῆς μηκέτι δύνασθαι τι καὶ ἰχϋεῖν τῆς φάυλης δαίμονας, μετὰ τὴν τῆς Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν εἰς ἀνθρώπους πάραδον, καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ καθ' ἡμᾶς τῶν δαιμόνων προήγορος ἐν τῇ καθ' ἡμῶν συσκευῇ τῆτόν πε λέγων μαρτυρεῖ τὸν τρόπον· Νυνὶ δὲ θαυμάζουσιν, εἰ τοσούτων ἐτῶν κατείληφε τὴν πόλιν ἡ νόσος, Ἀσκληπίε μὲν ἐπιδημίας καὶ τῶν ἄλλων θεῶν μηκέτ' ἔσης· Ἰησοῦ γὰρ τιμωμένῃ, ἐδεμῖας τις θεῶν δημοσίας ὠφελείας ἤσθετο. (*Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. V. C. I. P. 181. Par. Ed. 1628.*) There are other Evidences of this not a few, but they are so well collected, and the Enforcement of them is so well expressed by Mr. *Brooke*, that I shall refer Mr. *T.* to Him for full Instruction and Satisfaction. (See *Brooke's* Examin. P. 175, &c.) There are many Observations and Arguments to the same Purpose in my Father's *Dissert. Cyprian. XII. § 45, &c.*

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The second Head of Dr. *M*'s Enquiry related to the Persons endued with these extraordinary Gifts, whom He would represent to be not the Rulers and Governors of the Church, but the Lowest of the People; and He cites some Passages, wherein They speak of some of the Meanest Disciples, as possessed of this Gift. The ready Answer to this is, that They never *exclude Themselves*, or *confine* these supernatural Endowments to those *inconsiderable Persons*, but that their Argument *implied* their own Enjoyment of these Gifts, and was properly illustrated in those Instances, where there could be the least Suspicion of Art; and where the mighty Power of God shone the most illustriously thro' the Meanness of the Instruments. Mr. *T*. has allowed, that Dr. *M*'s Attempt of shewing that Some of the earliest Fathers disclaimed these Gifts, is weak and insufficient; and if They are not *expressly excluded* by some such plain Declaration, They must of Course be understood to be *included* in those general Assertions, wherein They claimed the Continuance of these Miraculous Powers amongst them, for the very Reason which these Gentlemen assign, namely, that it is not probable, that the common People were favoured with such Privileges as were denied to their Teachers and

M Rulers.

Rulers. When therefore Mr. T. repeats Dr. M's Representation, assisted with an Absurdity of Mr. *Whiston's* (who only is accountable for it) and then cries out, " is This rational? Is it credible?" We may answer freely, that it is not, and therefore these Accounts that Private People were sometimes so favoured, do plainly imply that their more eminent Bishops and Apostles were likewise so distinguished. But it is very *rational* and *credible*, that They should make the best of their Argument, should lay the Stress of it, where it was most incontestable, and specify Those, who by their Age, or Sex, or Education, were the remotest from any Suspicion of great Attainments in Themselves. Mr. T. thinks indeed, that " an inquisitive Man cannot be satisfied " with this my Solution of the Matter, " That the Mention of these (the meanest " People) who were the least capable of " Craft or Fraud, must be most convincing " to Gainsayers." But as This again is only his *Opinion* unsupported by *Argument*, as He has not shewn this Solution to be groundless and trifling, as I had observed, that in all like Cases it is usual to specify those Persons, in whom the Force of the Argument will appear most to Advantage, and They have therefore done no more in this

this Account, than is customary in other parallel Instances; the Solution as yet appears rational and pertinent, and may be satisfactory to the inquisitive.

But says Mr. T. " Can Mr. D. produce " an Instance of any one Gainfayer, who " was convinced by them?" I answer, the Success of Christianity under these Pretensions, as represented under the last Head, contains a Proof of Thousands of Instances of Gainfayers, who were convinced by them. But the Names and Professions, and Habitations of these Persons, the Time, and Occasion, and Manner of their Conversion are not particularly recorded.---They are not, but whatever was the Reason of their omitting to register *these Circumstances*, the *Fact* is equally sure and certain, that such Converts there were, that Professors of the Gospel increased and multiplied; when such publick Claims were made and offered to Examination; when, if They had been groundless, They had been easily proved to be so; and such Proof must of Course have put a Stop to the Progress of that Cause. We must argue on the Evidence as it lies before Us, and not as We may on either Side fancy that it should have been, to render it more satisfactory. For We may with more Reason demand some Instance on Re-

cord, wherein this Challenge was publickly made, fairly accepted, and finally detected; or, where the *Publick Teachers* of this Religion renounced all Share in this Privilege Themselves, and only insisted, that the *inferior* Part of their People, or their *Women* and *Children*, could work Miracles, tho' *They* could not. This would have been a strong Presumption against the Reality of such Miraculous Powers remaining in any Persons, but no such Instances can be produced, and therefore the positive Proofs of their Continuance stand free from any such Objections.

The Evidence, as it appears in *Fact*, and not in Correspondence to our *Wishes*, or our *Curiosity*, stands thus. The Claims to miraculous Powers were made *publickly*, and Enemies were *invited* to look into them. In this Situation Christianity prevailed, when a Failure in such Pretensions must have proved fatal. The particular Persons who wrought them, or who examined and were convinced by them, are not set down in their Histories, but neither is there any Record of their being publickly detected; but on the contrary those Apologies, wherein these Challenges were so openly made, several Times obtained favourable Rescripts from the Emperors: The Claims are made in such general

ral Terms, that altho' it does not follow from Them that Every Individual Christian had a Supernatural Power, yet I think it does, that no particular Order or Station was excepted, supposing always the Necessity of the Occasion. The Writers in saying that We do such Things, or such Things are "done among Us, or by Us," plainly speak of the *Body of True Christians* in general, and cannot in common Sense be supposed continually to *except* Themselves. They sometimes indeed, to obviate all Objection from any supposed Proficiency in themselves, descend to specify the *Meanest* of their Brethren, and insist that They (on proper Occasions We may be sure) were able to do the same. Thus *Tertullian* in the Instance, which I before referred to on this Point, did not *appropriate* to Himself, or to Any of the Principal Governours of the Church, that supernatural Power which He was there speaking of, but insisted that *Any Christian whatsoever*, that should be called on by the Magistrate, should at the Peril of his Life undertake to perform the Miracle. In this Sense I understand that Testimony of *Irenæus*, that "All, who were truly Disciples of *Jesus*, worked Miracles in his Name," and that Other, that such Works were done by Exorcists, by Ignorant

“ Laymen, Women, Boys (or rather Youths)
 “ and any simple (that is, any plain and
 “ unlearned) Christian whatsoever.” Not
 that every Individual had the Power of
 working Miracles at large, or that any one
trifled with such supernatural Gifts as He had,
 and exerted them in any or no Occasion;
 but that the *Meanest sincere Christian*, when
 He was called to a publick Conflict with
Heathens, was, on such an Exigency wor-
 thy such an Interposition, endued with
 Power sufficient in and thro’ the Name of
 Christ, to work a Miracle for the Confir-
 mation of his Brethren, and the Conviction
 of Adversaries. This was suitable to the
 most rational Account of that *Faith of Mi-*
racles, which is so often spoken of in the
 New Testament, the expected Completion of
 our Saviour’s Promise to *Those who should be-*
lieve on his Name, and entirely consonant to
 that Dispensation of the same Gift which
 We find described in the Epistles.

For tho’ Mr. T. is pleased to say, that no
 other Person whatsoever is spoken of as work-
 ing Miracles just after the Descent of the
 Holy Ghost, but the *Apostles* Themselves,
 yet it seems to me very plain, that Others
 were thereby endued with supernatural Gifts;
 or St. Peter could not have represented this
 Event as a Completion of the Prophecy
 which

which He referred to; *This*, says He, *is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last Days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all Flesh: and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy, and your young Men shall see Visions, and your old Men shall dream Dreams. And on my Servants, and on my Hand-Maidens I will pour out in those Days of my Spirit, and They shall prophesy*, Acts ii. 16, &c. Could this Prophecy have been said to be fulfilled, if only the *Twelve Apostles* had been endued with these Gifts? Or is it not a plain Account, that Some of them, in different Kinds and Degrees, abounded amongst Young and Old, and even amongst Those of different Sexes as well as Ages, just as they are described to do in the following Times?

Mr. T. says “ He must confess, it does “ appear probable from St. *Paul’s* Epistles, “ that some Other Persons were invested “ with those Powers;” If This be but a bare *Probability*, I shall despair of proving any Thing *certain* merely from *his* Authority. The *Apostle* does not barely *hint* it, or go about to establish it as a *disputed* Point, but He speaks of it as a well-known Fact, directs to the proper Use of such supernatural Endowments, and enters into *Compa-*

rison concerning the Use and Excellency of *these*, and of the *ordinary* Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit.

Upon the Whole there appears no such Difference, as Dr. *M.* has represented, between the Dispensation of the Miracles as recorded in the New Testament, and in the Writings of the earliest Fathers. The former is expressly said to be such as compleated the Prophecy of *Joel*, and the latter is described to be no more: For tho' Mr. *T.* by Way of Contempt, talks, as if the Account of these After-Writers was, that the Power of working Miracles was commonly exercised by Women and Children, yet no such Account can be proved from their Writings; We read in the Sacred History of *Virgins that did prophecy*, and We read parallel Accounts in Ecclesiastical History: But Dr. *M.* knew how to make the Distinction, when it would serve his Turn, between *Prophecy* and *Miracles*. Neither is there any such Declaration, that *Children* worked Miracles, but the Passage so perverted speaks plainly of *Youths*, and of Illumination by *Visions*, in Allusion clearly to that forementioned Prophecy.

Mr. *T.* concludes this Point with saying, that " it is much more consonant to his
 " Notions of the Matter, to suppose that no
 " Man

“ Man ever did work a Miracle without
 “ a special Commission and Designation
 “ from Heaven; and that it lies upon me
 “ to shew the contrary.” I do not well
 understand what is the Task here assigned
 to me. If He means, as He seems to do,
 in Support of Dr. *M*’s Opinion that “ these
 “ Gifts were restrained to a Few of the
 “ eminent Disciples, who were particularly
 “ commissioned to propagate the Gospel,
 “ and preside in the Church of Christ,”
 that None were favoured with them but
 Those of the *Clerical* Order, then I think
 the contrary very plain from St. *Paul*’s
 Epistles, and particularly from those Passages
 wherein He distinguishes, between *Teachers*
 and *Workers of Miracles*, and again between
Miracles and *Governments*; Not that these
 Offices were not *sometimes* exercised by the
 same Persons, but that they were not *neces-*
sarily so: That they were *distinct* in their
 own Nature, and dispensed to Believers
 with great *Variety*. In what other Sense
 Mr. *T.* meant, that “ No Man ever did
 “ work a Miracle without a special Com-
 “ mission and Designation from Heaven,”
 I do not know. None of them ever pre-
 tended to work Miracles in *Virtue of their*
own Power and Holiness, but *in and thro’ the*
Name of Christ. The actual Endowment
 of

of them with such Power from Heaven, and a proper Call to exercise it on an important Occasion, was in itself *Commission* and *Designation* sufficient. They could not work Miracles without such Assistance from Heaven, and with it They certainly needed no other *particular Warrant* than a *rational* Judgment of the Weight of the Cause on which They undertook to do it.

Dr. M. under the Third Head attempted to invalidate the Credit of those Fathers, on whose Testimony the main Question concerning the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the Church, depended. He began with *Justin Martyr*; and the Charge against Him was, that He pretended to a Knowledge of the Scriptures by *Inspiration*, which his many wrong Expositions of it shew He had not. My Answer was, that He made no such Pretensions, and therefore his Want of such Gift was no just Reflection on Him. I observed that it was not clear that there was any such Claim at all in the Primitive Church, and that the Sense of the *Prophecy* and the *Interpretation* of it, as spoken of in the New Testament, was less clear and determinate than That of any other extraordinary Gift. But says Mr. T. “ in the “ Extract Dr. M. has given Us from this “ Father, I find these Words; Others had “ the

“ the Knowledge of future Events, Visions,
 “ and Prophetical Sayings. Now by *Propheti-*
 “ *cal Sayings*, I should naturally understand
 “ the *Sayings of the Prophets*, and the *Sayings*
 “ *of the Prophets* I understand to constitute
 “ a Part of the *Holy Scriptures*.” I should
 think it much more natural to understand it
 in its most obvious Sense as *Predictions*,
 which might be, and most probably were,
 those of their own Times, and not of those
 former inspired Writers, whose Works consti-
 tute a Part of the *Holy Scriptures*. Had This
 been the Meaning, it is most probable, that
 They would have used the very Words, of
 the *Sayings of the Prophets*, or in some more
 determinate Phrase, and not have spoken
 merely of *Prophetical Sayings* in Conjunction
 with *Visions*, both which were Gifts in Be-
 ing in their own Days, and therefore would
 of Course be understood as spoken of them :
 And it appears from the New Testament
 that the Gift of *Prophecy*, and the *Interpre-*
tation of it, were distinct Blessings. Far-
 ther, if This had been meant of interpreting
 the Holy Scriptures, it might reasonably be
 expected, that the Mention of this Gift would
 have occurred in other Places, and have
 been supported by parallel corroborating
 Testimonies. But We find no such Passages,
 which

which is a strong Objection against this Interpretation of this.

However, if any such Gift did then subsist, yet I insisted that *Justin Martyr* made no such Claim, and to this Purpose I examined particularly every Passage, which Dr. *M.* had produced from Him, to support this Charge, and shewed that neither the *Expressions* used, nor the *Context* would admit of any such Sense as a Claim to *Inspiration*. I observed that He had not, in any one of the Places referred to, used the *Term*, which could be interpreted of an *extraordinary Gift*, but that He spoke of *the Grace of God* in the common Style of every good Christian; that neither was He speaking of *Himself* in particular, but of the Blessing and Privilege which *all* the Professors of the Gospel enjoyed in the Knowledge of this Revelation. What now might have been expected from the Defender of Dr. *M.* on this Head? Should He not have supported the Charge, have reviewed the Passages, and shewn that the *Phrase* or the *Context confirmed* Dr. *M.*'s Interpretation, or were *favourable* to it, or at least were *capable* of it, in Opposition to what I had shewn to the contrary? But Nothing of this Kind is attempted. Mr. *T.* contents Himself with saying that “ He must still declare Himself
“ of

“ of Opinion, that those Passages look very
 “ strongly that Way.” Are We then to
 be guided by *Looks* and *Appearances*, and to
 neglect an Examination into the customary
 Meaning of the *Expressions* used, the *Occa-*
sion on which they are introduced, and the
Connection of the preceding and subsequent
 Passages? Mr. T. however offers a Reason,
 such as it is, for his Omission in this Place.
 Whether, says He, “ these Expressions are
 “ meant of ordinary or extraordinary Grace, I
 “ shall not spend many Words in disputing,
 “ because ’tis not at all material to the Point
 “ in Hand.” On the contrary, it was the
most material Circumstance that He had here
 to consider; It was the very Point in Ques-
 tion between Dr. M. and Myself. The Dr.
 charged *Justin Martyr* with Fraud sufficient
 to disqualify Him for a Witness, in that
 in this Instance He made Pretensions to a
 Power which He had not, and therefore
 might be supposed to do the same in other
 Articles. I allowed that He had not this
 Gift of *interpreting the Scriptures* by *Inspi-*
ration; but added, that He never claimed
 it; and therefore his Integrity stands unim-
 peached, and He might be a very compe-
 tent Witness in Matters wherein He spoke
 of his own Knowledge, tho’ He had not
 other Talents, which He never pretended
 to.

to. Here then We joined Issue, and the very thing, on which this Part of the Controversy turned, was this; whether it appeared from the Passages produced, that *Justin* claimed the extraordinary Power of interpreting the Scriptures by *Inspiration*. If He did, his Credit and Character must certainly suffer, and no Stress could be laid on his Testimony in other Matters, who must have *prevaricated* wilfully in this; for We all acknowledge, that he was often mistaken in his Expositions of the sacred Writings. But if He spake only of the general Grace, and Favour, and Privilege, which *all* enjoyed, who were blessed with the Knowledge of the Gospel, then this has no Relation to the Point in Question, which concerns *supernatural* Gifts, and not the common Mercy of Revelation imparted to All who would receive it. The Concession of some *Errors* in *Interpretation* hurt not his Reputation in the Capacity of a *Witness*, unless He made false Pretensions to Infallibility; but no such can be proved upon Him, and therefore his Reputation stands clear in that Article, and no Exception lies against Him for the Want of a Gift, which was neither claimed by Himself, nor appears to have been granted frequently, if at all, to any Disciples. Nay to have rendered Dr. *M's*

Objection

Objection against *Justin Martyr* of any Force, it should have been proved, that He claimed a *constant* standing Power of giving an *inspired* Interpretation of Scripture, with which a wrong one given at any Time would have been inconsistent; or that He claimed such a Power just at the Time when He was giving a weak and foreign Exposition; otherwise according to Dr. *M*'s Supposition that "all such supernatural Gifts were imparted only at the Moment of their Exertion, and notified by some special Impulse to the Agent," He might, as I observed, have been inspired with the Sense of *one* particular Passage, on so important an Occasion as the Conviction of a *Jew*, and yet have been left merely to his own Reasonings upon others.

Mr. *T.* says farther, "that Dr. *Grabe*, "Dr. *Cave*, and the *Editor of Justin*, appear not to have rose much higher in their Veneration for Him as an *Interpreter* of Scripture, than Dr. *M.* does, and that to the Concessions of these learned Men Mr. *D.* is Silent." And what Occasion could I have to be otherwise if I was disposed to write pertinently to the Point in Hand? Neither my private Opinion, nor the Course of Argument that I was upon, could lead me in the least to contradict those

those learned Men, or to justify every Interpretation which *Justin* has given of the Holy Scripture. My proper and only Business was to clear Him from the Charge of wilful Prevarication, which might hurt his Testimony in other Matters; and this I did by shewing that He never pretended to the extraordinary Gift of expounding the Scriptures by *Inspiration*, as Dr. M. represents Him to have done. His *Mistakes* therefore, how many soever they may be supposed to be, cannot prove any *Falsification*, but He may still remain a good Witness, tho' not an infallible Interpreter of Scripture. But Mr. T. adds, that " the Concessions of these
 " learned Men must be looked upon as
 " substantial Testimonies against his being
 " under even the ordinary Influence of the
 " Holy Ghost in expounding the Scrip-
 " tures." Have They then allowed, that He has fallen into any *fundamental* Errors, destructive of the Christian Faith or Practice, which must suppose Him to be destitute of the ordinary Influence of the Holy Ghost? I am not sensible that They have made any such Concessions, or that They had any Reason to do so; yet Nothing less than such Tenets, as are inconsistent with the Necessity of an *Holy Life*, or with the *essential* Articles of the Creed, can reasonably be
 thought

thought to prove a Man thus deserted, or deprived of the common Assistance of the Blessed Spirit. The ordinary Influence of the Holy Ghost will no more preserve Any One from all Mistakes in expounding the Scripture, than in his Reasonings on other Matters; but whilst Fundamentals are preserved, I hope We are All under the ordinary Influence of that Blessed Spirit, tho' there are material Controversies between Us, and consequently very considerable Mistakes on One Side or the Other. If Any, if Many Errors would prove the Consequence here urged by Mr. *T.* against *Justin*, the Censure would fall hard against all the Commentators.

Mr. *T.* is so far capable of mistaking the Point in Question, as here to lay a Foundation for an imaginary Triumph. He thinks this Concession, that the *Martyr* was destitute of supernatural Aid in understanding and explaining the Scriptures, a Disproof of *Irenæus's* Testimony, that " All, " who were truly Disciples of Jesus, wrought " Miracles in his Name." " Behold here," says he, " an Exception to the Universality of " *Irenæus's* Assertion; and an Exception, " not of a *Boy*, a *Woman*, or *obscure Lay-* " *man*, but of a Scholar, an eminent Writer " and Champion; and at last a Martyr for

N

" the

“ the Christian Cause. And this is in the
 “ particular Case of understanding the Scrip-
 “ tures, or if Mr. *D.* likes it better, the
 “ Myſteries of God.” (P. 52.) Mr. *D.* He
 might have known, thinks theſe Caſes very
 diſtinct from each other, and both very dif-
 ferent from that of working Miracles. But
 he goes on, “ Is it, I aſk, ſuppoſeable, that
 “ God Almighty ſhould infuſe a Know-
 “ ledge of the Scriptures, or of any Myſtery
 “ whatſoever, into the very meaneſt of the
 “ People, and withhold it from a Perſon
 “ of ſuch an exalted Character in the
 “ Church as *Juſtin Martyr* was?” I would
 aſk in Return, againſt Whom this Gentle-
 man is arguing? If againſt any One, I
 think it is againſt Dr. *M.* who has declared,
 in one Part at leaſt, that extraordinary Illu-
 minations, Viſions, or Divine Impreſſions,
 do not in any Manner affect or relate to
 the Queſtion now before Us. But where
 did Mr. *T.* find any ſuch Representation as
 He ſeems in this Place to be oppoſing?
 I never heard of any One, who thought
 that *Juſtin* was inſpired in his Expoſitions
 of Scriptures, or that tho’ *He* was not, yet
 the *common People* were generally or often ſo
 favoured. If Mr. *T.* thinks that “ this Cir-
 “ cumſtance (namely that *Juſtin Martyr*
 “ was not ſo inſpired) might induce a Man
 “ to

“ to believe that no such extraordinary Gift
 “ was at that Time bestowed upon any
 “ Body;” yet as it does not appear to
 have been claimed by Any Body, No ill
 Consequence can follow, no Prejudice can
 arise against the Testimony of the Fathers in
 the Points which They did claim, and which
 cannot be disproved. I had observed in *the*
Free Answer, that in all the Passages cited by
 Dr. M. I found no such Claim as that of
 an extraordinary Power of expounding the
 Holy Scriptures;---that the Knowledge of
 Mysteries might supernaturally be infused
 without it;---that such Gifts seem to have
 been occasional only, and to have ceased
 very early in the Church, the Necessity of
 them ceasing after the very first Exigency.
 St. Paul, We know, being from *Jerusalem*
 at the Time of his Conversion, had the
 Knowledge of the Christian Doctrines super-
 naturally infused into Him by Revelation,
 and Others in the like Situation might be
 favoured with the like Blessing, whilst Those,
 who had Opportunities of full Instruction
 by *Human Means*, might well be left to
 them for Information. Such a Gift could
 be expected no longer than such particu-
 lar Uses could be served by it, and this in
 the same Age might be more *necessary* or
useful at least to One Person than Another;

and it would be no Kind of Objection, that one Person could not be possessed of it, because Another, of equal Eminence in other Respects, was not favoured with it. These Gifts were given in great Variety, so as might best Answer the Necessities of the Disciples so distinguished, or the Uses of the Church in general. *Justin Martyr* therefore might have this Talent and not Others; or Others, and not this, without any Appearance of Inconsistency with the Dispensation of Miracles as set forth in the New Testament. If indeed an *inspired* Knowledge of the Sense of the Scriptures had been the common Privilege of the Meanest Disciples, it would not have been credible, that *Justin Martyr* should have been destitute of it; but as no such Thing is pretended, Mr. T. in this Place is merely combating with his own Mistake. What the *Prophetical Gifts* were, which *Justin* says were continued among them to his Time, it may not be easy to say certainly; but He does not say, or intimate, that they were *inspired* Interpretations of the Old Testament. Most probably they were particular Revelations on sudden Exigencies, or Directions what Measures or Persons should be employed on the Occasion, such as those recorded *Acts* xi. 28, and xiii. 2.

Whatever

Whatever They were, They might be bestowed upon *One* upon a pressing Exigency, and not upon *Another*, tho' a Bishop or Martyr, where no such Exigency appeared to require it.

But the proper Question is, What is it to the present Purpose, whether He had any of the *Prophetical Gifts* or not? Might He not want those, and yet be endued with the Power of *working Miracles*? St. Paul's Interrogation before alluded to, implies that these Gifts were commonly given to distinct Persons, and were less to be expected in the same Character? *Are all Apostles?* says He, *Are All Prophets?* *Are All Teachers?* *Are All Workers of Miracles?* 1 Cor. xii. 29. Dr. M. understood his Argument better than to put his Objection in this Manner. He charged *Justin* directly with *Falsification*, in pretending to a Gift which He had not; and this Charge, if supported, would have hurt his *Moral* Character, for We could not have depended on his Veracity in any Instance, who was detected to falsify in One. But the *Defender* has varied the Objection, has given up the Point, as not material, whether He made any such Pretensions or not; and has stated the Case thus, that He confessedly had not one particular Gift, and therefore could not have any other. He was

not *inspired* in his Interpretation of the Scriptures, and therefore could not *work a Miracle*. This Representation of his Objection, which is a just one, will, I presume, make any other Answer needless.

Dr. M. proceeded farther, and charged *Justin* with two such gross Mistakes in *plain and obvious Facts*, as He called them, that no One, as He inferred, could be a competent Judge of other Matters, who was capable of being deceived in these. I took these into Consideration, and shewed what Reason there was to think that He was *not* mistaken in these Cases; or that his *Mistakes*, if they were such, could no Way hurt his Character, as a *Witness of Facts*. These Points Mr. T. thought fit to pass over in Silence, and has neither given up, nor defended the Dr's Charge on this Head; so that what I had offered on that Subject, stands as yet in its full Force.

I had observed upon the Whole, that should We admit all the false Opinions and weak Reasonings, which Dr. M. has charged upon this Father, yet they would not affect his Credit as a *Witness of Matter of Fact*. "Pray" says Mr. T. "what Fact is He a Witness to? Why He is a Witness to this Fact, that Miraculous Powers were continued and frequently exercised amongst Christians in his Days. "But for my
" Part,

“ Part, says Mr. T. I see none; not a
 “ single Instance produced.” This again is
 a very distinct Point, and a very plain Eva-
 sion. For what *Justin* asserts of *many* He
 plainly asserts of *more* than a *single Instance*.
 If I testify, that I saw a Physician cure an
 hundred Persons in any peculiar Method, Am
 not I as much a Witness of a Matter of Fact,
 as if I testified the same with Respect to a
 single Instance? And would not my Quali-
 fications, as a *Witness*, of Course be canvassed?
 Or would Any One think it sufficient to
 say, that He saw no Fact that I was Witness
 to; not a single Instance produced? If the
 Enquiry was made on such an Occasion, why
 I specified the *whole Number* rather than
 named any one *particular* Person, possibly I
 might answer, that I thought this Method
 the most satisfactory; that such *repeated* In-
 stances would be more convincing, and
 would cut off those Evasions, which might
 more plausibly be offered in a *single Case*.
 And perhaps the Primitive Writers might
 have assigned the same Reason, could They
 have foreseen this Objection to their Testi-
 mony.

But Mr. T. adds somewhat, which seems
 more to his Purpose, “ We do not find *Jus-*
 “ *tin Martyr* affirming the Truth of any
 “ One Miracle as actually having been the

“ Object of his own Senses.” If He means that He has not used these very Words, possibly it may be true; but if He means, that He does not speak of them as Matters of frequent Occurrence to the Senses of *Himself*, as well as of *Others*, the contrary may easily be proved. The very Testimonies produced from Him by Dr. *M.* are sufficient to prove it; and to these Some Others may be added. The Dr. observes, that “ He frequently appeals to what Every One might see with his own Eyes in every Part of the World:” which does not look like the Sentence of a Man, who had not seen these Things with his own Eyes Himself: and He particularly tells the *Roman* Senate, that these Cures not only had been done, but were even then done thro’ the Name of the *crucified Jesus*. But says, Mr. *T.* “ Neither in his Apology, or his Dispute with the Jew, is there one Event indisputably *supernatural* related or referred to:” That is again, not *One* Event, because *Many* such are referred to, and made Matter of Triumph over the *Jews*, from whom these supernatural Gifts confessedly were departed. But Why, Mr. *T.* means to say, was not One Instance particularly recorded on this Occasion with all its Circumstances? It is hard to write or to argue in such a Manner

as to preclude all Objections, but it seems very probable that had these Apologists followed the Method now prescribed to them, and specified a particular Case, the *Jews* or *Heathens* in those Days would have drawn Matter of Suspicion from that very Method, and have converted it into an Objection. Why, might They, and probably would They have argued, is a particular Instance singled out, in which there may be Circumstances which We are ignorant of, and cannot account for? If This supposed Miracle was wrought in Vindication of their Religion, why are not such Miracles more commonly wrought, which might prevent this Objection? Why are not Appeals made to the *frequent* Exercise of this Power, and Why are We not called on to see and examine them at any Time upon an important Occasion? This, 'tis likely would have been the Course of *their* Objection, if these Primitive Writers had only given *particular Instances*; and would not This have been more plausible than the present Exception of the *Want* of single Instances? Those Writers thought so, and I see no Reason to think that They did not judge right: or that this Method of challenging all Adversaries to enquire, and appealing to what All might see with their own Eyes in all Parts of the World, was
not

not the most convincing and satisfactory that could be offered.

Mr. T. says, He has done with *Justin Martyr*, and will proceed to *Irenæus*; and here He finds himself “ obliged to repeat the “ Question, What are the Miraculous Facts “ which He has attested? Does He say, that “ He ever performed One Himself? No such “ Matter.---Does He say, He had ever seen “ a Miracle performed by Another? Not so “ much as this neither is affirmed.” The Answer must be repeated, that He has not said this in these Words, but He has said what implies this and much more, and in a Manner much more satisfactory and unexceptionable. One should be tempted to think, that Mr. T. not only had not read *Irenæus*, but not even the Author whom he has attempted to defend. For the Extract, which He has made from this Father, would unanswerably have obviated all that is here suggested. *All that* “ are truly Disciples of “ *Jesus*,” says *Irenæus*, “ receiving Grace “ from Him, wrought Miracles in his “ Name ;” but that this general Assertion might not be mistaken, as if these Gifts were exerted on *trivial* Occasions, or as if they were *all* given to the *same Person*, so that He, who had not One, might be presumed to be destitute of the Rest, He adds expressly, “ for

“ for the Good of Mankind, according to
 “ the Gift which Each Man had received;
 “ Some cast out Devils ;—Others had Know-
 “ ledge of future Events, Visions, and Pro-
 “ phetical Sayings : Others healed the Sick
 “ by Imposition of Hands : That even the
 “ Dead had been raised up, and lived after-
 “ wards many Years among them, that it
 “ was impossible to reckon up all the
 “ mighty Works which the Church per-
 “ formed every Day to the Benefit of Na-
 “ tions ; neither deceiving, nor making a
 “ Gain of Any, but freely bestowing what
 “ it had freely received. And as to the par-
 “ ticular Miracle of raising the Dead, He
 “ declares it to have been frequently per-
 “ formed on necessary Occasions ; when by
 “ great Fasting, and the joint Supplication of
 “ the Church of that Place, the Spirit of
 “ the Dead Person returned into Him, and
 “ the Man was given back to the Prayers of
 “ the Saints.---And again, We hear Many,
 “ says He, in the Church indued with pro-
 “ phetic Gifts, speaking with all Kind of
 “ Tongues ; laying open the Secrets of Men
 “ for the Publick Good, and expounding the
 “ Mysteries of God.” Could Any Testi-
 mony be more express, that these Gifts had
 been the Object of his own Senses ? He
 avoids the Mention of any *particular Instance*,
 because

because He lays the Stress of his Argument on the *Frequency* of them, on the *Number* of the Persons who were thus endowed, on the *many* and *publick* Occasions which They took to exert these Gifts, whenever They could serve the Good of Mankind. He speaks in such a Manner, as to *include* Himself amongst the *Many*, but does not claim it as his *peculiar* Privilege, because it was not so, and because He might well esteem it more convincing to Others, to insist on the *diffusive* Communication of these Gifts to so many of the Professors of Christianity, on proper and important Occasions. Had he said, “ I “ can perform such a Miracle, or I have “ seen such an One performed,” Would not such a Testimony have been less satisfactory *then*, and been more easily ridiculed and evaded *now*, than such an explicit and publick Appeal to the *numerous* Instances, in which their Adversaries might receive Satisfaction? If They were favoured with such *frequent* Exercises of these Gifts, Why should They forego the Advantage to their Argument, which would arise from thus urging it? Or why should it now be an Objection to their Testimony, that They did not pursue a Method, which must have been less proper, on Supposition of the Truth of what They have asserted? If these Considerations have

have been repeated, the Repetition of the same Objection seemed to make it necessary. It does not follow, that the Apologists did not *claim* these Gifts *Themselves*, because They did not *appropriate* and *confine* this Claim to Themselves. If They spoke in such *general* Terms, as must be supposed to *include* Themselves as well as Others; and if the Reason of the Thing confirmed this Supposition, (it not being credible, as these Gentlemen are ready to allow, that these Gifts should be dispensed to the meaner People, and withheld from their Governors and Teachers) then no Inference can be drawn to their Disadvantage from this Method of Appeal; but a plain Benefit arises from it, in the *publick* Offer of such *frequent* Means of Conviction to all Opposers. Those Primitive Writers were Wise enough to make the best of their Argument, and if the Later Ones are not Wise enough to see the Force of it, That shall, I hope, be esteemed no Prejudice to the Prudence or Fidelity of the Testimony of the Former.

I had observed that “scarce Any Thing
 “more is laid to the Charge of *Irenæus*, than
 “a Collection of false Opinions, which, if
 “All admitted, are Nothing to the Purpose
 “as to the Point in Question concerning his
 “Attestation of miraculous Facts.” Mr. T.
 thinks

thinks This would be a good deal to the Purpose, but assigns no Reason for it, nor makes any Attempt to prove that *Infallibility* is necessary to the Character of a competent *Witness of Facts*. But “ tho’ This, He says, “ would in Truth be a good Deal, yet it is “ not quite all. Something more is laid to “ his Charge, and the Words *scarce* imply “ Mr. *D.* was sensible of it,” Dr. *M.* had not carried his Charge so high against *Irenæus* as He had done against *Justin*. He had not brought any formal Accusation against this Father of making any Pretensions to a Gift which he had not, but only collects all the *Mistakes* in Opinion which He could find in his Writings (and some of them are misrepresented) and accuses Him of supporting them by Tradition: Which, if proved, I may venture to say again, will scarce amount to more than an Error in Judgment. But Mr. *T.* attempts to make it out. “ This,” says He, “ is not only delivering down false Doctrines, “ but a false Fact.” How so? Does it appear, that there was no such Tradition? If there was, might not *Irenæus* report it, and believe the Thing too which had been reported to Him, without being guilty of any Falsification in Fact? But says Mr. *T.* “ Which “ Fact He must either have invented Himself, “ or it must have been imposed upon Him “ by

“ by Some Body else.” I may here in my Turn ask, What Fact? The Whole Charge relates to traditionary Opinions, and tho’ I easily see there must have been a Mistake somewhere, yet I cannot see any Reason to conclude that any false Fact was invented any where. Let Us instance in the Opinion of the *Age of our Saviour*, or of the *Millenium*, or any other Point that is charged upon *Irenæus*. Suppose *Papias*, or any other very early Christian, reading the *Gospel* or the *Revelation* of St. *John*, and mistaking the Sense of what that Evangelist said upon those Articles, should instruct his Disciples that St. *John* taught so and so, might not They easily imagine, that the *Interpretation* itself was that Apostle’s, and deliver it as such to their Successors, who of Course would continue the Account to After-Times? And might not *Irenæus* then make a very true Report, in saying that there was such a Tradition, tho’ the Tradition itself was originally founded upon a *Mistake*? This is the very Account that *Eusebius*, as cited by Dr. *M.* gives Us of it; and according to this Account there was no wilful *Falsification* in Any Person, but an Early Mistake was made and prevailed, till the Publication of it in Writing gave Occasion to look into the Foundation of it. This may well be thought a good Argument against relying

lying too much on *Oral Tradition*, but by no Means invalidates the Credit of One, who made a true Report of such a Tradition. A Man may be a most unexceptionable Witness of those Matters of Fact, which come within his own Knowledge, tho' he might be imposed upon by an Account which had long continued, and which was owing to an Error at first. The Possibility, the great Probability that the Errors spoken of did thus arise from the Mistake of some very ancient Instructor, is a sufficient Answer to what Dr. M. urges, that "if We absolve *Irenæus* from the Forgery, it must fall on Some Body else, more ancient still, and of Authority enough to impose it upon Him" (*Free Inquiry*, P. 59.) There is no Necessity, no Reason to suppose a *Forgery* any where. A Wrong Method of Reasoning, in a Person of Authority, might lay the Foundation of a wrong Doctrine, and whilst this passed in Oral Tradition only, it might gain Strength by Continuance, and All this might happen, in the Manner before represented, without any *designed Fraud* in Any One. To this Supposition Fact corresponds, and it is remarkable, as I before observed, that That, which was the most palpable Mistake, sunk upon the Mention of it by *Irenæus*, because such publick Mention of it most probably

bably gave Occasion to a publick Inquiry into it.

Mr. T. goes on to repeat Dr. M's Quotations from *Photius*, and Dr. *Whitby*, and Dr. *Cave*, concerning the false and spurious Reasonings of *Irenæus*, and his being betrayed into Errors by false Reports: And then adds, "Now what does Mr. D. urge to justify *Irenæus* against all these Accusations? Why "not a Word." P. 57. This, to speak the softest, is a great Mistake. I had obviated all that was urged on that Head, by observing, that false Opinions, or Mistakes in Reasoning are Nothing to the Purpose in a Question concerning the Attestation of miraculous Facts. I enlarged on that Point; and added farther both of *Him* and *Justin Martyr*, that tho' the weakest Parts of their Writings had been collected, on Purpose to expose them, yet that a thorough Perusal of them would yield many Instances of solid Reasonings and correct Compositions, &c. such as would give Us no ill Opinion of their *Judgment*, much less of their *Veracity*. This, I humbly apprehend, was not only *saying a Word*, but a Word to the Purpose, against such general Charges as those of *false Reasonings*, when the Point in Dispute was his Credit as a *Witness* of Facts. But in Reality, the Instances which Dr. M. has produced to hurt his Credit, are

O

not

not properly so much as those of *false Reasoning*. They are no more than *Typical* and *Allegorical* Representations, which were used in Compliance with the Custom of those Times, and had their Use amongst Those who had been familiarized to those Sort of Arguments. They appeared not to *them* in the same weak and feeble Light, as They do to *Us* who are accustomed to a better Way of Reasoning; but I cannot think it any very material Objection to the Primitive Writers, that They conformed to the Times They lived in, and wrote in such a Manner as might be more serviceable to their *Contemporaries* than to *After-Ages*.

Mr. *T.* adds, “ He singles out the particular Mistake imputed to *Irenæus* concerning the *Old Age* of our Saviour, which with all his Skill is impossible to be defended, and drops all the Rest.” All the Rest were obviated by the general Remark before-mentioned, but it seemed proper to single out this Instance, because it was the only one wherein the Charge amounted to *Forgery*. Dr. *M.* laid great Stress on it; He introduced it three Times, and on the last observed, that “ Whoever forged the Rest of the spurious Traditions above recited, yet that which relates to the *Old Age of Jesus*, the most solemnly attested of them all, and
 “ peculiar

“ peculiar to *Irenæus*, may fairly be presumed
 “ to be his own Forgery, because it was ne-
 “ ver embraced by Any Body else” (*Free*
Inquiry, P. 59.) This gave it a Title to my
 particular Regard, and I took the whole Pas-
 sage into Consideration. But Mr. T. says,
 “ it is impossible to be defended.” Short and
 Peremptory, but no way satisfactory, unless
 Mr. T’s *Opinion* is to pass for *Argument*. This
 I observe is the Method which He has used
 throughout his whole *Defence*. When He
 comes to any material Passage, which was the
 Foundation of the Dispute between Us, He
 pronounces my Answer to be Nothing to the
 Purpose, and then He thinks the Business is
 done. But Dr. M’s *Defender* had Occasion
 here, as well as elsewhere, for somewhat
 more than a *magisterial Assertion*. I had
 charged the Dr. with misrepresenting *Irenæus*
 in this Passage, with dropping some of his
 Words on Purpose to misrepresent Him, with
 adding others to make his Argument appear
 ridiculous; and I shewed from a View of the
 whole Passage, how the Mistake might easily
 arise without any wilful *Forgery*; and that as
 to the Plea of unanimous Tradition, That
 appeared, from the very Words used, to be
 meant rather of the *general Heads* of the Dis-
 course, in which it was *true*, than of this
particular Circumstance, in which it must have

been *erroneous*.--To all this the Reply is, that it is Mr. T's Opinion, that "it is impossible to be defended." But He adds, "Whether therefore We consider Him as *Imposing*, or being *imposed* upon, the Result will be just the same. We can allow as little Credit to his Testimony upon one Supposition as the other." (P. 58.) This is extraordinary indeed. According to this Account, A Man convicted of *wilful Falshood*, and one who innocently continues a Tradition originally founded on a *Mistake*, are on a Level with Respect to the Credit of their Testimony. Whereas I should imagine, that He who had *wilfully falsified* in one Instance, was little to be depended upon in any other; but that He, who *faithfully made the Report* which was made to Him, tho' the Thing reported was ill-grounded, might yet be a very competent Witness, when He came to speak of Facts within his own Knowledge.

This Distinction will likewise afford that clear and distinct Answer, which Mr. T. says it would have been very much to my Purpose to have given to the several Questions cited by Dr. M. and repeated by Himself, from Mr. *Chillingworth*. "If *Papias* could either by his own Error, or a Desire to deceive, cozen the Fathers of the purest Age, why not also in other Things? Why not in Twenty

“ as well as One? And why might not
 “ Twenty Others do it as well as He?”. I
 am far from thinking this One of the most
shining Passages in the excellent Author from
 whom it is cited, for all these *Possibilities* are
 of no Force against *real* Evidence and *positive*
 Testimony. If We take the most favourable
 Supposition, as I think We ought, that the
 Mistake said to be derived from *Papias*, was
 owing merely to *his own Error*, and not to a
Desire to deceive, then it is much less probable,
 that He should mistake in *twenty* Instances
 than in *One*. Or if He was that *Weak Man*
 that He is represented to be, it is still much
 less probable, that *Twenty Wiser Men* should
 mistake in like Manner. There is No
 End of putting such Suppositions as these,
 and when they are thus carried on, they ap-
 parently tend to destroy all Credit in present
 Testimony, and all Faith in past History. All
 Mankind *may be Knaves or Fools*, but the
 Question is not, what They *may be*, but what
 They *are*; and We must judge and act upon
 the best Evidence that We can collect of
 Mens Characters; and a bare *Possibility* of the
 Contrary will not defeat or weaken the *Proofs*
 which We have of the Integrity and Under-
 standing of Many of our Fellow-Creatures.
 However this Argument may look in Contro-
 versy, a Man would be thought Mad in Com-

mon Life, who should refuse to trust a Person of experienced Honesty and Prudence, merely because it was *possible* that He might mistake or deceive in that particular Instance. A Thousand such Questions therefore would not invalidate the *Credit* of the primitive Fathers, in their Attestation of the miraculous Gifts, which continued amongst them in their own Time: And tho' such Considerations were of some Weight in Mr. *Chillingworth's* Argument concerning the Uncertainty of Tradition, where the *Mistake* of a Person in former Ages might easily be carried on by the Verbal Report of Successors, and gain Credit for Want of Inclination or Opportunity to examine into it, yet what Connection have they with the Case of Those, who reported Miracles of which They were Themselves the *Workers* or *Witnesses*, who committed these Reports and Claims to Writing in their own Times, challenged their Enemies to look into them, staked their Lives on their Veracity, and in this Situation continued to propagate their Religion, and bring over many Converts to it, of the Great and the Wise, as well as of the Meaner and more Unlearned. The *Unanimity* of the Claimants in this Article, wherever or however situated, the uniform and concurrent Testimony of all the earliest Primitive Writers in all Parts of the World,

with

with Respect to the Continuance of miraculous Powers among them, is a Circumstance of great Weight; for sure there were some Wise and Good Men amongst them, who could judge of such a Point, and who would not falsify: Or can it be supposed that They would all hazard their Lives and their Salvation, by insisting on a Claim, in which They knew They were prevaricating with God and Man?

Under the Fourth Head of the *Free Inquiry*, Dr. M. proposed to “take a particular
“Review of all the several Gifts or Miracu-
“lous Powers which were actually claimed
“and pretended to have been possessed by
“the Primitive Church.” And the First that he instanced in was that of *raising the Dead*, which *Irenæus* says was frequently performed on *necessary Occasions*. I observed that there was great Stress to be laid on that Clause, as obviating Dr. M’s Representation, as if it were performed in every Parish or Place, where there was a Christian Church, on which He founds his Wonder, that no Instance of it should be recorded. “One single Instance however,” says Mr. T. “He has mentioned as slightly intimated
“by *Eusebius*, from *Papias*, and which He
“tells Us, *Eusebius* seems to rank among
“the other fabulous Stories delivered by
“that weak Man. To this Circumstance

“ Mr. *D.* says Nothing, tho’ if a Church
 “ Historian of Reputation, who lived so
 “ near the Time as *Eusebius* did, rejects as
 “ fabulous the only Instance of this Mira-
 “ cle that ever was recorded, it cannot fail
 “ of inducing a Suspicion, that the whole
 “ Pretence to it was groundless; it is at least
 “ a tolerable Proof, that He did not believe
 “ it Himself. And if *Eusebius* did not be-
 “ lieve it, why is it to be wondered at, that
 “ Dr. *M.* gives no Credit to it?” Had Dr.
M. drawn these Inferences from this Cir-
 cumstance, I certainly had not passed over
 it, which otherwise was very little material.
 It is as easy to say in the first Place, that *Eusebius*
 does not seem to rank this amongst
 other fabulous Stories, but relates it without
 any Censure. Or had He given up this
 particular Instance, it would not follow that
 He disbelieved all others; and We have
 Reason to believe the contrary, namely, that
 He did believe the Continuance of this Power
 in the Church, because He has Himself pre-
 served to us the forementioned Testimony
 of *Irenæus*, which He certainly would not
 have done, had He not given Credit to it
 Himself.

But here the old Objection occurs, Why
 not One Single Instance recorded? That is,
 with Circumstances of Time, and Place, and
 Person.

Person. I had offered a *general* Reason, which might possibly account for this. "The supposed *Frequency* of this Miracle, I said, *might have been* the very Cause, why particular Instances might not be recorded, since All were equally extraordinary, and had no distinguishing Circumstances." Mr. T. "begs Leave to think that this is downright ridiculous." (P. 61.) He has my free Leave to think so of the Whole, or any Part of my Performance, and the rather so in this Part, because He has not only given Us his Opinion, but made Something like an Attempt to prove it. "Was it," says He, that the People of such a Country went to Bed at Night, and rose again in the Morning, the Plea might be admitted as a pretty good One; but to see it seriously urged in the Case of a Fact of so extraordinary a Nature as That of *raising the Dead*, I must beg Leave to think it downright ridiculous. Consider it well; it is no trifling inconsiderable Business; the restoring to Life again a Person known to be Dead, is a striking and most astonishing Effect, that must awaken the Attention of Every One that beheld it." This is true, but appears so in a much stronger Light to Us, who live long since these supernatural Effects have ceased, than it did to Those who

who lived in the Age of Miracles. But says Mr. T. " We cannot suppose it to have happened so frequently as that it ceased to appear extraordinary, &c." So say I too, and therefore This was properly *Argumentum ad Hominem*, and related to Dr. M's Misrepresentation of *Irenæus*, as if *He* had said, that it was frequent in every Parish or Place where there was a Christian Church. Had this been the Case, it would have grown so familiar as to be less striking and astonishing, and the Frequency of other supernatural Gifts did of Course lessen the Astonishment of this particular Miracle. But I observed against Dr. M. that the Frequency of this Miracle, being limited to *necessary Occasions*, could be only *comparative*; and the Reason assigned, why possibly no particular Instances were recorded, was, not that they ceased to be extraordinary, but that " All were equally extraordinary and had " no distinguishing Circumstances;" not that they were " undistinguished from all other " Events, and unworthy the particular Recital of every Writer of the Age," as Mr. T. represents it, but that the *Raising of the Dead* was so miraculous in every Instance, that there could be little Reason to record one Instance in Preference to All Others, and to omit the Rest. Had one been recorded,

corded, the Question then probably would have been, Why but One? Had One or More been recorded by Each Writer, these would have been stiled a *few*, and it would have been inferred, that the Case would have been more common if it happened at all; that the Collection was inconsiderable, and that the Appeal ought to have lain to a *general* Grant and a *frequent* Exercise of it. But this was not the only Consideration that I offered on this Occasion, tho' it was the only One that Mr. T. thought fit to take Notice of. I asked farther, " Who should be expected to record " these Instances?" Not *Heathen* Historians, because They did not believe them, but rejected all such Reports as impossible in themselves; and because if They had believed them, it would have been Self-Condemnation in them, to have recorded them: Not *Christian* Historians, because there were none such in the three first Centuries, and because, if there had been, such a Specification of the Instances of the Person raised might have been attended with Inconveniencies, which it was their Business to provide against; whereas their Argument held at least as good by a *general* Assertion of the Fact as exemplified in *many* Instances rather than in One. Our Lord Himself, who

certainly

certainly could, and who actually did escape by Miracle, when Danger unavoidably pressed on Him, whilst *his Hour was not yet come*, did yet, by Way of Pattern to his Disciples, use great Precaution to avoid such Danger; and if They followed this Example, and omitted to Name the Persons raised, that They might not bring down Persecution and Vengeance on them, They shewed their Piety and Prudence in so Doing. After all, We know not perhaps the Whole of their Reasons, why They did not follow this Method now so importunately called for; but this Omission is no Sort of Disproof of the Fact, of which We have such unquestionable Testimony. When our Saviour sent out the *Twelve* in his own Life-Time, He gave them this in Commission amongst other Privileges, to *raise the Dead*, with this particular Injunction, that *as They had freely received, so They should freely give*. It cannot be doubted, but that, in Obedience both to their Master's Precept, and in Good-will to their Fellow-Creatures, They exerted this Talent, communicated this Blessing, and restored Life to the Dead; and yet there is not a single Instance of it recorded. These were the first Instances of this Kind that had happened amongst them, even before any that their Blessed Master had wrought, according to the History of the Gospel,

Gospel, and of Course occasioned the greatest Surprize and Astonishment, and yet the *Names* of the *Persons* that received this high Benefit from them, and the Circumstances of the Cases, are all passed over in Silence as well by the Inspired Writers as by All Others. As This Power was expressly given to the Apostles, whilst our Saviour was on Earth, it may reasonably be presumed, that it was *continued* to them after his Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, and yet We find but one Instance of any Person restor'd to Life by any One of the *Twelve* throughout the New Testament. I mean that of *Tabitha*, by St. *Peter*, and of *Eutychus* only by St. *Paul*: Still have we Reason to conclude that They All had the same Gift, and exerted it on necessary Occasions, as *Irenæus* expresses it, tho' but one or two particular Cases are transmitted to Us by the *Apostolical* Writers, any more than by the *Ecclesiastical* Ones; and whatever Considerations may account for the Omission of the Former, may serve as well for the Latter. The Case of *Autolytus* comes next under Review, where Mr. *T.* instead of defending Dr. *M's* Representation, or invalidating mine, is pleased again to give Us his Word, that All that I have said on this Point only “ shews, “ how weakly Any Man can argue, when
“ He

“ He engages to defend the wrong Side of
 “ a Question.” But this is much easier
 said than proved. It became Dr. *M*’s *Defen-*
der to shew the Weakness of my Arguing on
 this Point, and to prove that I had the
 wrong Side of the Question. I pointed to
 several Mistakes in Dr. *M*’s Account of this
 Matter. I shewed that *Autolycus* made no
 such Offer of turning Christian on seeing a
 Person raised, as should induce Him to
 work such a Miracle ; as is very plain from
Theophilus’s Answer. I shewed likewise, both
 from the Reason of the Thing, and from
 another Part of *Theophilus*’s Answer, that *Aut-*
olycus’s Demand was not to see One that
 had *formerly* been raised, but to see One
 raised in *his own Presence* ; and therefore
 there might be several Such then living, and
 ready to have been produced, for any Thing
 that appears to the contrary from this Pas-
 sage. This was the very Point on which
 Dr. *M*. introduced the Mention of this Case,
 and in which I acknowledged the Objection to
 be plausible. *Irenæus* had said, that “ even
 “ the Dead had been raised, and lived af-
 “ terwards many Years among them.” Dr.
M. thought to disprove this by observing,
 that “ in the very same Age, when *Autoly-*
 “ *cus*, an eminent Heathen, challenged
 “ *Theophilus*, Bishop of *Antioch*, to shew Him
 “ but

“ but One Person, who had been raised
 “ from the Dead, He was not able to give
 “ Him that Satisfaction.” (*Free Inquiry*,
 P. 73.) In this Light this Passage was
 pertinent to Dr. *M*’s Purpose, because it
 might well seem unlikely, that All the
 Persons that *Irenæus* spoke of, were al-
 ready Dead the second Time, and not an
 Instance to be produced for *Autolycus*’s Sa-
 tisfaction. It was therefore to the Purpose to
 shew, that this was not the Sense of *Autoly-*
cus’s Demand, that He spoke of some *pre-*
sent, and not of any *former* Instance; and that
 therefore *Any* or *All* of Those, of whom *Ire-*
næus spake, might yet be Living, there being
 no Occasion or Thought of producing or
 mentioning them in this Controversy between
Autolycus and *Theophilus*. Thus the Force of
 Dr. *M*’s Objection was taken off, and the
 forementioned Testimony of *Irenæus* justified
 from any seeming Contradiction to it in any
 other Part of History: But the *Defender* did
 not see, or did not attend to it in this Light,
 but runs off to another Point, and is pleased to
 call this most excellent Answer of *Theophi-*
lus to his Friend’s Demand, “ Nothing but
 “ Shuffle and Evasion, plainly demonstrating,
 “ that He was not able to give Him the
 “ Satisfaction He required, either by raising
 “ a Person Himself, by letting Him see
 “ One

“ One raised by any other, or by shewing
 “ Him one now alive, whom He could
 “ make sufficient Proof to have been once
 “ Dead.” These Cases are very different.
 He might be able to shew Him One who
 had formerly been raised from the Dead; and
 whom He could prove to have been so raised;
 but *Autolytus* would have listened to no Proof
 of that Kind, for He insisted on *seeing* One
 raised himself; and whether *Theophilus* could,
 or could not do this, has no Relation to the
 Testimony of *Irenæus*, that *Others had been*
raised, which Dr. M. endeavoured to im-
 peach. *Theophilus* might possibly have this
 Gift, and yet not think this a *proper Occasion*
 to exert it, and the Reasonings, which He
 Uses in his Answer, very much favour this
 Supposition. Or suppose *He* had it not,
Irenæus might have it; or suppose *Neither of*
them had, *Others* might have been favoured
 with it; or at least *Others* might have met
 with more *necessary Occasions* and Calls to
 exert it. It is remarkable, that *Irenæus* re-
 presents this particular Gift not so properly
 as the Endowment of any *Particular Person*,
 as the Endowment of *the Church*, exercised
 and obtained by the united Prayers of the
 Faithful. Now tho’ *Theophilus* might know
 that such a Gift still continued in *the Church*,
 yet He might reasonably judge, that the
 Church

Church might not think this Exigency sufficient to occasion them to procure such a miraculous Work by particular Devotion, and especially as He Himself knew enough of *Autolycus* beforehand, to believe that even the Working of such a Miracle would be *insufficient* for his Conviction. This does not therefore seem to be One of those *necessary Occasions*, of which *Irenæus* speaks, on which such a Miracle was likely to be performed. *Autolycus* does not appear by the Account of Him to have been a Person of such extraordinary Worth, as to induce the Church to apply for such a supernatural Interposition merely for his particular Satisfaction. Neither is it clear, that the Conviction of Adversaries was the *sole* or *chief* End of this Gift of raising the Dead. Dr. M. allows, that the Design of those extraordinary Gifts, which He admits to have been bestowed upon the Disciples at first, was “ to enable
 “ them, not only more easily to over-rule
 “ the inveterate Prejudices both of the *Jews*
 “ and *Gentiles*, but also, to bear up against
 “ the discouraging Shocks of popular Rage
 “ and Persecution, which They were taught
 “ to expect, in this Noviciate of their Ministry.” (Pref. P. 28.) Now This Miracle in particular might very probably be wrought chiefly for this latter End. It is certain it

had a strong Tendency to answer that Purpose, and to support the Spirits of Disciples under the severest Persecutions. The Enemies of the Gospel, as *Irenæus* observes, thought the Thing *impossible* in itself, and therefore did not trouble themselves to look into any particular Reports about it. This might be one Reason, why it was less frequently offered to them, and why We hear less of this Miracle in particular from other Writers, who make Mention of other supernatural Endowments. Yet still it might be of great Use in the Church, whenever it was wrought, for the *Comfort* and Encouragement of *Believers*, tho' not for the *Satisfaction* and Conviction of *Gainsayers*. The *Necessity* of the *Occasion* spoken of most probably relates to the *Usefulness* and *Importance* of the *Person to be raised*, whose Continuance in Life was deemed of so much Consequence to the Service of their Religion, that the Church thought fit to solicit it by united and extraordinary Devotion. This is another Reason, why, tho' all that *Irenæus* had said was true, and tho' the same Power still continued in the Church, yet *Theophilus* might not be able to give *Autolycus* the Satisfaction that He demanded, there being no such eminent Person just at that Time deceased at *Antioch*, whom the Church might think fit

to

to recall by so miraculous an Interposition. But suppose farther, that the Power of *raising the Dead*, had rested solely in a *single* Person, and that *Theophilus* had claimed to be that Person, his not exerting this Power to please *Autolycus*, would be no Disproof of such his Pretension. He declares that if it was done, *Autolycus* would still find some Objection to it; and whether We impute the Exertion of such a Power to *sudden Impulse*, or to a *rational Judgment* of the Case, in neither Light could this be a proper Occasion for such a Miraculous Interposition. Our Saviour directed them *not to cast their Pearls before Swine*, and He Himself, after all his Miracles, refused to add one more for the Satisfaction of Those, who declared They would believe on Him, if he would then descend from the Cross at their Summons. Why such extraordinary Means of Conviction were granted to Some, and not to others, is another Question, but it is no Objection against the positive Evidence that is offered, that some Miracles were wrought, that they were not wrought whenever they were called for; at least it is no Objection, but what would hold as strongly against those Miracles recorded in *Scripture*, as against those which are related in *Ecclesiastical History*. This I had

observed before, tho' Mr. T. thought fit to take no Notice of it.

Under the next Gift reviewed, That of *Healing the Sick*, Dr. M. Himself introduced the Mention of *Proculus's* curing the Emperor *Severus* of a certain Distemper by the Use of Oil, as related by *Tertullian*; upon which I observed, that " here the Method " prescribed by Dr. M. to his Answerers, " had been used beforehand; the Persons " Healing and Healed are specified, and some " special Benefit of the Miracle credibly " reported." Of the Miracle says Mr. T. " I ask of what Miracle? *Tertullian* says " Nothing of a Miracle in the Case, and " why We are to lay a greater Strefs up- " on it, and call it a Miracle when He does " not, there is no Reason yet assigned." (P. 63.) He adds, " When a Man has once " got his Head full of Miracles, the com- " monest Events in Nature, the Rising of " the Sun at Six o'Clock in the Morning, " may be deemed Miraculous." *This*, as this Gentleman elsewhere expresses Himself, *may, if You please, be deemed Harangue and Declamation*, but I will add that it is neither *Wit*, nor *Reason*, nor *Good-Breeding*. It is a contemptuous Treatment of a Person differing in Opinion, for which No Occasion was given, and a Triumph extremely unsuitable

suitable to that superficial View of the Argument, and feeble Attempt to support it, discernible throughout this Defence.---But to the Point. Whatever was the Intent and Force of this Reflection, it was such as involves Dr. *M.* in the intended Censure, as well as his Opponents. For *He had got his Head so full of Miracles*, that He understood this as a Report meant by *Tertullian* of a miraculous Cure, and introduced it as such, tho' it was his Design to prove that *Tertullian* was mistaken in representing it as such. Had he not considered it as a *Plea* of this Sort, it had not been to his Purpose to have cited it under this Head; whereas He cited it here on Purpose to shew the *Error* of this *Plea*. But Mr. *T.* goes farther, and does not allow, that *Tertullian* Himself offered it as an Instance of a miraculous Cure, and asks, " Why we should lay a
 " greater Stress on it than the Apologist
 " Himself did?" We must refer therefore to the *Original Account*, to know what Stress the Author of it did really lay upon it, and from the *Manner* in which it is introduced, and the *Nature* of the Argument of which it is a Part, it will be Easy to discern what He intended by it. If the *Connection* of it with *other* miraculous Cures, urged as a Reason why the Magistrates should cease

to persecute the Christians by whom They enjoyed such Benefits, be any Sort of Proof, that This was meant of a *miraculous* Cure likewise, This Evidence of it plainly remains to Us from the Passage itself. *Tertullian* refers the *President of Africa* to some Persons, who could give Him such Information, mentions a Case or two which They could point out to Him, of their own Knowledge, of *Demoniacks* who had been dispossessed by Christians, goes on to add, that Many considerable Persons, (to pass over those of a meaner Station) had been by them delivered from *Demons*, and *other Distempers*, and then introduces the Mention of the Cure of the Emperor *Severus* by *Proculus*, by the Use of Oil, whom the Emperor Himself well knew to be a Christian, and favoured both his Person and Cause for that Purpose.---*Hæc omnia Tibi & de Officio suggeri possunt, & ab eisdem Advocatis, qui & ipsi Beneficia habent Christianorum, licet adclament quæ volunt. Nam & cujusdam Notarius, cum a Dæmone precipitaretur, liberatus est: & quorundam Propinquus & Puerulus. Et quanti Honesti Viri, (de Vulgaribus enim non dicimus) aut a Dæmoniis aut Valetudinibus remediati sunt. Ipse etiam Severus, Pater Antonini, Christianorum memor fuit. Nam & Proculum Christianum, qui Torpacion cognominabatur Eubodææ Procuratorem,*

curatorem, qui eum per Oleum aliquando curaverat, requisivit, & in Palatio suo habuit usque ad Mortem ejus: Now when He mentions thus together the *Dispossession of Demons*, and the *Cure of other Distempers*, as the former was known to be a *supernatural* Work, He must most naturally be understood to speak of the same *miraculous* Power in the *Healing of Other Distempers*, unless He has himself made the Distinction, and shewn by some other Circumstance, that He spoke only of the common *Medicinal Arts* in Practice amongst them. But no such Circumstance appears; On the contrary He speaks of these Cures in Conjunction with the *Dispossession of Demons*, as the *peculiar* Benefits, which the *Heathens* Themselves often received from *Christians*; and it is well-known that the Power of *Healing the Sick* was One of the Claims of these *Christians*, and is frequently mentioned in all their Writings amongst other *supernatural* Gifts. And surely there would have been much less Propriety in the Apology itself, and the Force of the Address to *Scapula*, to say, You should favour Us *Christians*, because We have Those among Us who can *dispossess Demoniacs*, and Others who are good *Physicians* in natural Cases, than if the Meaning was, You enjoy the Benefit of our su-

pernatural Gifts, not only in ejecting Demons, but in the Relief of all other Bodily Necessities: And then comes in the Account of the Cure of the Emperor *Severus* by *Proculus*, a Christian. But the Mention of the *Manner*, in which this Cure was performed, is a more distinguishing Proof that it was meant of a miraculous Instance of Healing. What Occasion could *Tertullian* have to specify the Remedy by which this happy Effect was wrought, but only to shew that it was *that* which was appropriated by Apostolical Authority and Primitive Practice to the *supernatural* Cure of Diseases? Or what Argument could it be to the Heathens to spare the Christians on this Account, if This was only meant of a *natural* Application, since the Secret was now discovered, the Remedy was easy, and capable of being applied as well by Themselves as by Any Others. But when We consider that there is a *Text* still in our Bible, which prescribes the *Anointing with Oyl* in the Case of *supernatural* Cures, that *Tertullian* had the Bible in his Hands, and has referred to this very Practice, it is not credible that He would have done this, if He had been speaking merely of a *Physical* Application in a natural Way. He would rather have avoided the Mention of this Prescription, lest He should

should seem to reflect on the *Manner* of working *supernatural* Cures, weaken thereby the Apostle's Authority, and the Claim so often repeated of the *Gift of Healing*. It is remarkable that tho' He has mentioned the *Remedy*, He has taken no Notice of the *Kind of the Distemper*, which was very proper, if He was speaking of a *Miracle*, this Method of Cure *by Oil* in that Case being equally applicable to *all* Distempers; but is utterly unaccountable, if He spoke of the Recovery as owing merely to the *natural* Effect of the *Oil*. Dr. M. however, observes on the Occasion, that the natural Power and Efficacy of Oil itself is found in our Days to be sufficient to cure the most threatening Effects of the *Bite of a Viper*, and therefore might effect the other Cures spoken of without any Miracle. But even This is a late Discovery, and it will be a more surprizing Discovery still, if Dr. M. thinks that because it may expel a particular Poison, therefore may cure all other Diseases in a natural Way. Yet St. James prescribed it for the *Healing of Sickness* in general, without any Mention of the *Bite of a Viper*, and it is least of all probable, that That should be the particular Case of the Emperor *Severus*.

Dr.

Dr. M's next Argument was this, that the Heathens pretended to the same Gift, and that therefore the Pretence of Christians to a miraculous Power in healing Diseases could have little Effect towards making Profelytes amongst those who pretended to the same Power. I answered, that " nothing " could be more proper for their Conviction " than a Claim of superior Power in the same " Way;" upon which Mr. T. remarks, " Now it is apparent to me, that a *Claim* " only of *superior Power in the same Way*, " was not sufficient for their Conviction, that " Nothing less was requisite than clear and " undeniable Proof." (P. 65.) What Trifling is this? Did I say, a *Claim only*, or could I be supposed to mean a *Claim* unsupported by *Proof*? Nay This Support was not only *implied*, but *expressed* in the remaining Part of the Sentence, which Mr. T. thought fit to drop. " Nothing," said I, " could be " more proper for their Conviction than a " Claim of superior Power in the same " Way, which might detect their Pretensions, if false; and if they were real, " might shew the mightier Hand of God " beyond that of inferior Agents." Was not This speaking of a *well-grounded Claim*, and such as, upon the very Supposition, was founded on sufficient Proof. But Mr. T. says,

says, “ no Example of this is produced.” I answer the *Success* of Christianity, under this Competition of Claims between the Heathens and Christians, is a Proof that there were many such Examples. It is a Proof likewise against Dr. M. that this miraculous Power when challenged by Christians, was capable of exciting Attention, and of working Conviction in Consequence of it. Neither is there any Reason to give up what was offered on the Case of *Proculus*, or to suppose, that this was not one Example of it. *Severus* was not in Himself disposed to be favourable to the Christians. Neither his Temper nor Education led Him to any such Favour. Nor can it well be supposed, that He would have applied to One of these People for Assistance in his Distemper, whilst He could have Hopes from any other Quarter. In his Situation He could not want Intelligence either of Those, who had the best Reputation for their Skill in curing Diseases in a *natural* Way, or of Those who pretended to the *Power of Healing* by a *supernatural* Gift. Whatever Applications were made by Any of these, failed of Success. He applied to a Christian, and was cured by the *Use of Oil*, the very Method prescribed and practised by Believers in the Case of *miraculous* Cures. This is the Fact, and the Presumption of his having first tried the

the Pretenders of his own Religion, arises with the greatest Probability from the Circumstances of the Case, from the Principles, and Practices, and Station of *Severus*. *M. T.* says “ We don’t know that He did, but possibly He might, and yet *Proculus* cure Him “ in a natural Way,” (P. 65.) I have offered my Reasons to shew, why there is no Probability that this Cure was effected in a *natural* Way, and *Severus*’s own Opinion of it may be judged of by the Favour that it wrought in Him towards the *Christians*. Had He thought that it was owing only to the *Skill* of the Man, and his Improvement in the *Medical Art*, his Respect would have been confined to the *Person* of the Man and not to the *Religion* which He professed. But if He thought, that his Recovery was owing to a *Gift* peculiar to the People of this Profession, (and the Method by which He was recovered of his Distemper, whatever it was, might easily induce Him to think so, and especially after the Failure of the Attempts of Others) then this was a Reason for extending his Regard to the *Profession* itself, and favouring, as far as He well could, All Those of that Persuasion. For tho’ the Fifth General Persecution arose soon after the Beginning of his Reign, yet it was not by *his* Direction or Encouragement. He did not indeed interpose to forbid it, Reasons of

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State probably hindering Him from disobliging his *Heathen* Subjects so far; but, as Opportunity served, He visibly favoured them, and by Example and Discourse, tho' not by a publick Edict, He discouraged all Prosecution of them, and even recommended them to Regard and Esteem. *Tertullian* tells Us, in the Passage immediately following this Account of *Proculus*, that the Emperor's Respect was not confined to the *Person* of his Benefactor, but that when He knew that several Persons of Eminence of both Sexes were of this Persuasion, He not only refused to punish them for it, but even honoured them with his Applause, and openly checked the Fury of their Persecutors. *Sed & clarissimas Fæminas & clarissimos Viros Severus sciens hujus Sectæ esse, non modo non læsit, verum & Testimonio exornavit, & Populo furenti in os palam restitit.* And tho' the fore-mentioned Reasons of State, and a Desire of ingratiating Himself with his own People, induced Him afterwards to publish an Edict forbidding Any One to turn either *Jew* or *Christian*, which occasioned the Persecution to revive and rage with greater Severity, yet it does not appear that He personally carried it on, but gave Way rather to the Zeal and Fury of Others, and was led by secular Motives into that *Inconsistency* too frequently visible in the

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the World, of wanting *Resolution* to maintain the Truth, tho' He did not want the *Judgment* to discern it. The Favour, which He actually did shew, when it was consistent with his other Schemes, shews his Opinion of the *Cause*, for which *Proculus* was an Advocate, and of the *Power* by which He had wrought his Cure; and if this was wrought, as most probably it was, after the Attempts of his own People had proved unsuccessful, He might well consider this as a clear and decisive Determination on which Side the Claim of supernatural Power truly lay: And This might be considered as a *real Competition*, tho' the Parties were not called to a formal Contest in his Presence, like the Case alluded to in *Egypt*. “ Mr. T. begs Leave to reject all the “ miraculous Stories related of the Monk *Hilarion* in a Bundle.” (P. 66.) If He does, I do not see that it affects the present Question: Nor do I think that such an indiscriminate Method of rejecting all, without Examination, shews his Judgment. It is a Method that may be used with *true* Miracles as well as *false* ones.

The Case of the *Dæmoniacs* came next under Consideration. I only observed that “ the Insinuations under this Head, would “ hold as strongly, if They were of any “ Force, against the *Scriptural* Cases, as “ against

“ against others.” Dr. M. had remarked, that what was called *Possession* seemed by all the Symptoms and Circumstances to be no other than the *Epilepsy*, which is just as true of the *Possessions* spoken of in the *Gospels*. He added that “ the Speeches and Confessions of the Devils, their answering to all Questions, owning themselves to be Wicked Spirits, &c. may not improbably be accounted for, either by the disordered State of the Patient, answering wildly and at random to any Questions proposed, or by the Arts of Imposture and Contrivance between the Parties concerned in the Act.” Whether this is a probable Account, or not, the same Speeches and Confessions are recorded by the *Evangelists*, and these Solutions, such as They are, will just as strongly invalidate *their* Report as that of their *Successors*. The Objections likewise from “ their preconceived Notions about the Origin and Power of Demons,” and from the “ Readiness of the Leaders of all Sects and Parties to make Use of a commodious Lie for the Advancement of what They call the Truth,” were urged in the most *general* Manner, without the least Distinction in Favour of the Inspired Writers, and of their Operations, any more than of those wrought and related

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by the *Primitive Fathers*; and the very same Objections have been, and daily are raised against the former as well as against the latter. The Insinuations concerning the false Pretences of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, the Easiness by which Christians were prejudiced and might be imposed on, in Favour of their own Impostors, the Convenience of setting up one Cheat to oppose Another, the Facility with which strange and surprising Feats might be performed by a Correspondence between the *Ventriloquist* and the *Exorcist*, All these *Possibilities*, however absurd in themselves, or inconsistent with each other, or repugnant to the plain Evidences of the Understanding and Integrity of the Relators, are as conclusive against the Credibility of the *earlier* as the *later* *Dæmoni-acs*, and may just as well be made to overthrow the Belief, that there ever was any such Possession of Men by Devils, or Dispossession of them. The *Intention* of the Writer in such a confused and undistinguishing Charge is out of the Question, but as his Argument reaches so far, it was proper to shew the *Tendency* and *Extent* of it, and to observe that the Credit of *Scripture* was not safe upon these Suppositions. Those excellent Writers, who undertook the Controversy relating to the *Dæmoni-acs* spoke

ken of in the Gospel, refuted all such Evasions, and by so doing, obviated the same in the like Cases when reported by the Primitive Fathers. Mr. T. happens therefore to be extremely mistaken, when He says, that “ None of their Performances “ can be of any Moment in the present Dispute.” They have already set aside all these Insinuations, which would have been as conclusive against *all* Possessions as *any*, and have ascertained the *Reality* of the *Distemper* and of the *Cure*, beyond all reasonable Exception, upon the Authority of Those who must be Judges of the Cases They reported, and who would not have been Guilty of false Testimony. The very same Kind of Evidence recurs in the Testimony of the Primitive Fathers. The Case of *Possessions* is represented as so *common* as that They could not mistake the Reality of it. They are All *unanimous* in the Attestation of it, and They would not, They could not have agreed in attesting such a Lie. Particular Cases, which They related upon Report, They might be *misinformed* in, but such Instances shew how certain was the Thing itself, and such fabulous Stories could not have prevailed, but upon the Credit which the many true Ones had raised. They appeal to *Enemies* as well as *Friends*; They chal-

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lence them to bring One, whom They knew to be possessed, and They would cure Him; and They remind them, that the Christians had cured Those, who had been found incurable by all Others. The Facts that They speak of, They must know the Truth of, and They confirmed their *Veracity* by testifying it with their Blood. Mr. *T.* makes his Exception to this Case different from that of Dr. *M.* He has allowed, what I believe the Dr. would not allow, at least what He has not yet allowed, that “when
 “our Saviour came upon Earth, God Almighty did permit evil Spirits to enter in-
 “to the Bodies of Men.” (P. 66.) He observes, that “our Saviour gave the Apostles a Power to *cast out Devils*, as distinct
 “from that of *Healing the Sick*, which, if
 “these Possessions had been only a Species
 “of Human Diseases, there would have
 “been no Occasion for Him to do.” (P. 67.) This is certainly one good Reason, amongst others, for this Opinion, and therefore the first and main Point is agreed on betwixt Us. The *Credibility* of the Miracle itself is not the Question in Dispute with Mr. *T.* whereas the whole Course of Dr. *M.*’s Arguments appear to me to be levelled at *that*, Mr. *T.* adds what He thinks the probable Reason of such a Permission at that Time, which

which was “ to demonstrate the supreme
 “ Power of Christ over all the Orders of Be-
 “ ings thro’ the whole Extent of Nature.”
 This likewise seems to be one good Reason
 amongst others which might be assigned, for
 that Permission, and most probably We do not
 see the Whole of the Grounds of that Dis-
 pensation of Providence. But Mr. T. says,
 that tho’ “ this is his Notion with Respect to
 “ those Possessions spoken of in the Gospels,
 “ yet He has not the same Authority to be-
 “ lieve Those of After-Ages, so much talked
 “ of by the Fathers.” He has not obliged Us
 with the Distinction, or shewn wherein the
 Testimony of the latter becomes any Way
suspicious. They speak of the *same Sort of*
 Possessions, describe them in the *same Manner*,
 prescribe the *same Form of Cure* thro’ the
 Name of Christ, represent them as the Oc-
 currence of *daily* Experience, and as a Matter
 in which *All* might receive *immediate* Satis-
 faction. In short, there could not possibly
 be one continued Scene of *Imposture* thro’ the
 whole Course of their Pretensions, but They
 must *All* be Privy to it, and this Supposition
 is excluded by the *Unanimity* of their Testi-
 mony, and their Readiness to suffer Martyr-
 dom in Attestation of their Doctrines. Mr.
 T. adds, that “ the whole End for which He
 “ can conceive these Possessions were per-
 mitted,

"mitted, being answered by what was done
 "by our Saviour, and those immediately
 "commissioned by Him, He sees no Reason
 "son for their Continuance." But neither
 does it appear, that the *whole* End, as described by Himself, was yet answered; nor would it follow, that because Mr. T. does not see any Reason for their Continuance, therefore there was no Reason assignable; nor yet would it be a just Inference, if no good Reason could be assigned by Any, therefore the Fact was false. There may be Motives and Designs in the Schemes of Providence, which We cannot see into, and our Ignorance of them is of no Force to overturn the Belief of a Dispensation confirmed by such concurring and unexceptionable Testimony. But the whole End itself, as described by this Gentleman, does not seem to have been so far answered, as to exclude the Reason for the longer Continuance of these Possessions. He supposes it to be to "demonstrate the Supreme
 "Power of Christ over all the Orders of Be-
 "ings, thro' the whole Extent of Nature." And was not This then better demonstrated, if it continued till the Religion of Christ was established on Earth? It is not pretended, that this Gift of *dispossessing* was confined to the Person and Ministry of our Saviour Himself. If it had, This might have been interpreted

preted to demonstrate *his Power alone* over those infernal Agents. But it is allowed, that it was *delegated* to Those, who were immediately commissioned by Him, and if their Exercise of it did, as undoubtedly it did, redound to the Honour of Him from whom they derived this Gift, and set forth his supreme Power and Authority, then certainly this End would be more effectually answered, if these Possessions, and the Cure of them, visibly lasted, till the Dominion of *Satan* was rooted out, and the Blessed Gospel established in its Place. Some learned Men have thought, that the Power of the *Devils* in possessing the Bodies of Men at that Time, was permitted as a *Judgment*, in Punishment of the many Diabolical Arts then prevailing, such as Magical Applications, heinous Immoralities, and gross Idolatries. If This was the Case (and Who can say that it was not ?) then it seems highly probable, that they should continue till a true Faith, a right Worship, and a holy Practice were recovered to Mankind by the Establishment of Christianity. This seems again the more likely, inasmuch as it does not appear by the History of these *Dæmoniacs*, that Any but *Unbelievers* or *Wicked Christians* were subject to these Possessions; Διαβεβαιούμεθα δε ἡμῖς καὶ τῇ πείρᾳ παραλαβόντες, ὅτι οἱ κατὰ Χριστιανισμόν διὰ τῷ Ἰησοῦ τὸν ἐπὶ πᾶσι θερά-
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πέποντες θεόν, καὶ βιβντες κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον
 αὐτῷ ταῖς προταχθεῖσαις δὲ εὐχαῖς συνεχέστερον
 καὶ δέοντως νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας χρώμενοι, ὅτε
 μαγεῖα ὅτε δαιμονίοις εἰσιν ἀλαλοί. Orig. cont.
 Celf. Lib. 6. Till Idolatry therefore was re-
 moved, at least so far as not to be supported
 by the Civil Powers, there seems to be the
 same Reason for the Continuance of these Pos-
 sessions, considered in a *judicial* Light. And
 as the *Cure* of them manifested the *superior*
Power of that Name by which they were cured,
 That End certainly was not so effectually
 answered, if they ceased so early, as that after
 all that had been yet done, the *Worship of Dæ-*
mons still continued triumphant, and upheld
 by all the Civil Powers of the Earth. If we
 join these Causes for the Frequency of Pos-
 sessions in those Days, as a *Punishment* on the
 Wickedness of Man, and as an Opportunity
 of *manifesting the Authority* of the Eternal Son
 of God, who then came into the World, per-
 haps We are nearer the Truth, than by in-
 sisting on either separately: But both these
 Reasons would lead Us to presume, that they
 lasted, till the Publick Profession of the Gos-
 pel had recommended the Professors to the
 Favour of their Maker; and till the Victory
 of Christ over all the Powers of Hell was
 made visible by the Publick Extirpation of
 all Idolatrous and Diabolical Worship.

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But whether we *speculate* right, or not, concerning the *true Ends* of that Dispensation, yet We may be sure that Mr. T's Account is not right, that "the whole End, for which those Possessions were permitted, was answered by what was done by our Saviour and those immediately commissioned by Him." We have unanswerable Evidence, that this *supernatural* Cure of them continued farther than this Limitation of them. Our Saviour Himself, just when He was on the Point of leaving the Earth, and after He had given all the Commissions which were given *immediately* by *Himself*, goes on to promise this as the *future* Privilege of those, who should believe on his Name, that *in his Name They should cast out Devils, &c.* Mark xvi. 17. He had conferred this Privilege in his Life-Time on his Apostles, and on the Seventy Disciples, when He sent them out to preach in his Name, and He now *extends* the Grant, and promises that the same Gift should *hereafter* attend on Those who should believe on Him. This was carrying it beyond those, who had the Honour of his immediate Commission; but still the Honour *ultimately* redounded to his Name, in which alone, by whatever Instruments, these supernatural Cures were wrought: And as We have this Evidence, that this Gift continued beyond the Apostles themselves, and as

all the imaginable Reasons for it still continued, during the Prevalence of that gross Idolatry, it may reasonably be presumed, that it did continue till the Name of Christ was *hallowed* by the *National* Profession of it, and his Religion became the Religion of Rulers.

Mr. T. goes on to raise a Suspicion, from a Circumstance, which is to me a Confirmation of their Pretensions, as being most agreeable to the Reason of the Thing, the Account of Scripture, and the Glory of God thro' *Jesus Christ*; which is declared to be the End of all the Dispensations of Providence, and is prescribed as the ultimate End of all our Actions and Designs. He observes, that all the Primitive Christians laid the great Stress on this Point, and challenged their Adversaries to be Witnesses, not to their raising the Dead, or restoring a Cripple to the immediate Use of his Limbs, but to their dispossessing a Dæmoniac. “ All their Boastings, says He, terminate in this Point, Bring Us a Person possessed with a Devil, and you shall presently see any common Christian command Him out.” He observes that in another Case the not raising a Person from the Dead, on the Demand of a Heathen, was accounted for by the *Want of a special Impulse* to work that Miracle; (tho' He knows that That was not the only Method offered of accounting for it, but
was

was urged particularly to Dr. M. on his own Principles) but that “ in the Case before Us “ the Parties are represented as ready to ex-
 “ pel Devils, every Day of the Week, or
 “ every Hour of the Day,” and then wonders what should make this Difference. If *Wondering* was of any Service in the Course of an Argument, I would wonder in my Turn, how a serious and attentive Peruser of the Scripture could make a Difficulty of this, or be at a Loss to see the Reason of this Difference ; much more how He could make it the Foundation of any Objection. It is observable that our Blessed Lord, when He sent out the Apostles to preach in his Life-Time, and again, when He was renewing the Commission to them to preach the Gospel, just before his Ascension, does in both Places, amongst other Privileges, make particular Mention of this. He varies the other Instances, in which They should be enabled to work Miracles, but as if on Purpose to distinguish this, as that which was on no Account to be omitted, He specifies the *casting out Devils* in both those Catalogues of supernatural Gifts. There is not any other repeated in those Accounts (except where the Appointment of a *peculiar Form* in the Performance occasioned the Repetition) but this Gift alone stands thus distinguished, closing the former and beginning

ning the latter List of extraordinary Endowments, *Mat. x. 8.---Mark xvi. 17.* Now why this Distinction? Why this peculiar Stress laid on this Gift? Let Us learn, if We can, from the first Disciples of Christ, those immediately commissioned by Him. Our Lord on another Occasion, distinct from that before mentioned, *appointed other Seventy also, and sent them two and two before his Face into Every City and Place whither He Himself would come,* Luke x. 1. He commissions them to foretell his Approach, and prepare his Way, and the only *Extraordinary* Endowment, which the Evangelist has expressly recorded as then bestowed on them is, that of *healing the Sick*, v. 9. under which, as appears by the Event, the dispossessing of *Dæmoniacs* was included. Let Us hear now the Answer of the *Seventy*, when They returned with Joy on the successful Execution of their Commission. They do not say, “*Lord, We have raised the Dead, or We have restored Cripples to the Use of their Limbs :*” But *Lord, even the Devils are subject unto us thro’ thy Name,*” v. 17. This They thought to be the *greatest* Miracle in itself, or the *most to the Honour* of their Master; and in which ever Light We take it, it will, I hope, be no Reflection on their Successors, that They followed this Example, and laid the Stress on the same supernatural Event.

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Our Lord accepts and confirms their Report, by referring to the first Fall of the Prince of those Dæmons that They spoke of, when He, the Eternal Son, was the Author of and Witness to his Confusion and Dejection; *I beheld Satan as Lightning fall from Heaven*: Or if this be interpreted rather as a Prophetic View of his speedy Fall, by the future Success of the Gospel, from that Adoration and those Divine Honours, which were then paid to Him, still the Argument is the same; and the Reason of dwelling particularly on the Power of *ejecting Devils* in the Name of *Christ*, appears in the fullest Light as tending most immediately to the Glory of the Redeemer. Thus the Disciples, in the forecited Triumph, expressly ascribe the great Event to the Powerful Name of their Master. Other Miracles only shewed his Power over the Works of Nature, which might have been a *delegated* Power, but this directly shewed his *inherent* Power and Authority over the highest Orders of created Beings, who were forced to *tremble* at the Name of Him that made them, and were compelled not only to quit their Station at his Command, but to confess his Sovereign Authority, and to bear Witness to his Power in *express Words* as well as *submissive Deeds*. The Power of the Devils over the Bodies of Men at that Time may properly be deemed supernatural;

natural; and therefore a Power still superior to theirs, restraining and removing them, and extorting from them a Confession of their Nature and Subjection, might well be considered as the most considerable Miracle itself, and as such be most frequently proposed for the Conviction of Mankind.

Another Reason for singling out this Miracle from the Rest might be on Purpose to detect the vain Pretensions of the Heathens in this very Respect, and to force them to a Competition, which could scarce fail of ending in the Satisfaction of every impartial Enquirer. Dr. M. says, that “ All the Fathers, who lay so
“ great a Stress on this particular Gift of casting out Devils, yet allow the same Power
“ both to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as well
“ before as after our Saviour’s Coming.” (*Free Inquiry*, P. 84.) In Proof of this of the Fathers, He has only cited *Justin Martyr* and *Origen* as saying, that *the Devils would submit to the Name of the God of Abraham*. But to the former He has not done Justice herein. Dr. M. with good Reason dropped this Part in his *Greek* Citation, that it might not be observed with what Caution *Justin* spake on this Subject. He said ἵσως ὑποταγέσεται---*They would perhaps submit*---which Dr. M. by his Translation turned into a positive Assertion. What *Origen* says indeed is more
express,

express, and might be true in some particular Instances, and yet even this appears by those Testimonies to have been related upon *Report*. But Nothing can be more plain than that the Fathers did not allow this Power to be the Privilege of the *Heathen Exorcists*; on the contrary, They insist that *Christians* dispossessed Those who had failed of Help from all other Pretenders. *Tertullian* in particular represents the Whole as Collusion, as the Art of the *Dæmons* Themselves to give Countenance to Magic and Sorcery; not that the Exorcists had really any Power over the Devils, but that those Evil Spirits themselves taught secret Rites, and then withdrew upon the Exercise of them, on Purpose to raise the Credit of those Impostors, and thereby to promote Superstition and Idolatry in the World. *Lædunt enim primo, dehinc Remedia præcipiunt ad Miraculum nova, sive contraria, post quæ desinunt lædere, & curasse creduntur.* Apol. C. 22. The Intelligence of much less subtle Beings might be capable of this Management, and in this Situation No Claim could be urged with so much Propriety by the Christians, as This of *dispossessing* the Devils, and forcing them to own themselves such. The Pretensions to other Miracles might be evaded or ballanced by Those *Exorcists*, who claimed this Power of ejecting *Dæmons*,
but

but when their Claim was invalidated at the same Time, and in the same Method by which the superior Power and Authority of the Christians was testified, This carried the strongest Force of Argument possible, and was peculiarly fitted for the Conversion of those Heathens. The Apologists with one Voice represent this Matter in this Light. They tell their Adversaries, that the Objects of their Worship should, at an Injunction given in the Name of *Jesus*, own themselves to be *Devils*, not only *Creatures*, but *impotent* and *wicked Creatures*, unable to stand before even the Servants of Christ. Now to those idolatrous Worshippers of Devils, What Argument could be in any Degree so proper as This? What Miracle could be of half that Force; or on that Account be so fit to be the Subject of a constant Claim as This, which struck at the very Root of their Worship, and shewed them not only the *Power* of the *Name of Christ*, but the *detestable* Nature, and *abject* State of those Beings, which as yet They had adored?

A farther Reason, why this of *dispossessing Devils* was the constant Challenge and Foundation of Triumph with the Primitive Christians, may with great Probability be taken from the *Nature* of the Case, the *frequent Opportunity* which was offered them of exercising

ercising this Talent, and the great Benefit which thereby redounded to the most distressed Part of Mankind. Mr. T. asks, “ Why should it be more in their Power “ to drive out a Devil at a Moment’s “ Warning, than to raise the Dead at a “ Moment’s Warning?” (P. 69.) The Mention of these two Cases points to a plain Difference, which ’tis most likely was the real Cause. It was in *all* Instances proper to assist and relieve Those who were thus unhappily possessed, when they were called on by their Adversaries; but it could not by any Means be proper, that *All* who *died* should be *raised again*, whenever Unbelievers were pleased to demand it. This was a Gift, which could not be supposed to be given promiscuously, or to be exerted indiscriminately; The Character and Situation of the Person to be restored, was much to be considered in a Miracle of that Nature: Or if in One, or a Few Instances, the Conversion of Heathens only was regarded, yet it would be morally impossible that such a Gift could be a *frequent*, much less a *standing* one, because it would have perpetuated that Generation, and would in many Respects have been inconsistent with the other Designs of Providence. The Time at which Men are called out of Life is One of the
 most

most immediate Acts of our Maker and Preserver, and is attended with the most important Consequences, not to be reversed without a particular Commission and Direction. This was certainly a Case, if any, which needed a *special Impulse*, and was not to be undertaken in general, at all Events, without Respect to Persons, and Times, and other Circumstances. The same may be said of *healing* those Diseases, which lead to Death, which could not in all Cases be proper for the same Reasons; whereas whilst such Possessions were permitted, they might, without any like Inconveniences, be removed at any Time; and if they were then permitted on Purpose to demonstrate the supreme Power of Christ over all the Orders of Beings, then the more frequently the afflicted Persons were relieved, the more frequently was that Power manifested: And the very Nature of this Gift furnishes Us with a Reason, why this in particular should be offered to Examination every Day of the Week, or every Hour of the Day.

One farther Reason may still be assigned why This of *dispossessing Devils*, was the standing Challenge of the first Christians, because This alone seems to have been the *common Privilege* of all Christians at that Time. It was not only a Gift very proper to be exerted at all Times, but it is described as capable

pable of being exerted by every the meanest Believer. It appears like the Privilege of their Baptism, for the *Name of Christ* pronounced by Any One, that was *fæderally* related to Him, was sufficient to make the Devils quit their Station, and own the Authority of that powerful Name. Thus the Fathers represent it, and particularly take Notice, that any common Christian was able to perform this, and would undertake it at the Hazard of his Life. It was of this Office especially that *Origen* observed, that *it was performed generally by Private Persons*, not intending certainly to *exclude* Others from the same Power, but because a Gift, common to All, was left to be exercised by the Meanest Believer, as in them, unassisted by any outward Advantage, the Grace of God would shine most conspicuously; and *Origen* Himself, in the Passage referred to, goes on expressly to assign this Reason for it. This Account of this being the only *universal* Gift, and therefore the only one universally claimed, is remarkably confirmed by what *St. Paul* has said on the Subject of extraordinary Endowments in the 12th Ch. of his first Ep. to the *Cor.* He there speaks of the Variety with which they were dispensed to different Persons, Some to One, and Some to Another. He recounts every particular Gift (except this one of dispossessing Devils) and

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says

says that they were given separately to *Some*, but not to *All*. Now why was this one particular Gift omitted, but because it was not true of this, as it was of all the rest, that it was confined to particular Persons? We have seen already, that it was a Gift of too much Importance to be passed over in Silence, and that there can be no Reason to suppose that it ceased so early; and therefore no Account can be given, why the Apostle, who was so minute in enumerating every other particular Gift, should take no Notice at all of this; but only that *this* was not *appropriated*, like the *others*, to any distinguished Saints in *Exclusion* of their Brethren, but was the common Glory of every Professor of Christianity. By *one Spirit*, as the Apostle says in the same Chapter, *They were All baptized into One Body, and were All made to drink into one Spirit*, v. 13. and this Spirit, which was the Gift of the Church, and of every Member of it, was sufficient to put to Flight the Evil Spirits, and to extort from them the Acknowledgement of their Nature and Condition.

If then a Gift, which more immediately tended to the Honour of their Redeemer's Name, and on which particular Stress is laid in Scripture, both by our *Saviour* and his *First Disciples*; if a Gift, which in the Nature of it best confounded the vain Pretensions
of

of the Heathens, and overthrew the Foundation of their Worship; if a Gift, which in the Benefit of it to Mankind, and its Serviceableness to the Glory of God, was at all Times proper to be exerted, without interfering with the other Designs of Providence, but promoting the very End assigned for the Permission of such Possessions; if Lastly, a Gift, which was the most unconfined and general, and the common Lot of every baptized Person, if This was the constant Subject of Claim and Triumph amongst the Primitive Christians, It will, I trust, yield no reasonable Cause of *Suspicion*, but will rather shew, that They understood the Nature and Use of the Endowments that They were blessed with, and made a wise and proper Application of them.

On the Case of *Prophetic Visions* I had observed, that This, by Dr. M's own Confession, was the least to the Purpose of any; "Gifts," says the Dr. "of this Sort were
 "merely Personal, and do not therefore in any
 "Manner affect or relate to the Question now
 "before Us." Whether therefore these were proved or disproved, was not material according to his Account; and so They were passed over with this Remark, that there was little more than Dr. M's Suspicions to prove any of them to be *false*, much less to be *designed Frauds*.

Frauds. This Distinction seemed proper, for Those Stories which They related upon *Report*, They might be *mistaken* in, without any Impeachment of their *Veracity*, which only could hurt the Credit of their Testimony in those Matters which They reported upon their own Knowledge. And as to those Visions which They attest as made to Themselves, there is Nothing objected to them, but what might equally have been objected, if they were never so true, and therefore cannot prove them to be otherwise. Mr. T. however takes one Gift in particular into Consideration, because He did not find that Dr. M. entered at all into the Discussion of it. It relates to *the Discovery of Mens Hearts*, as given to some in the Primitive Church, which He thinks not credible, because “it was not vouchsafed to “the Apostles themselves,” but was, as He represents it, peculiar to our Saviour, and “no weak Argument of his Divinity.” He observes that “there is Nothing of this Nature in the Commission where their other “Powers are severally delegated to them, “and where We might expect to have found “this also inserted, had it been intended for “them.” If the Gentleman means that Commission in the forecited Passage of St. *Mark* xvi. 17, 18. then I say it is certain, that They had some other extraordinary Gifts, besides those

those which are particularly specified in that List; They had some other distinct Powers given them when they were first sent out to preach, *Mat. x. 8.* which no Doubt were now continued to them. If He means, that *those* should be presupposed, and added to *these*, to compleat the List of the Powers annexed to their Commission, then I say farther, that it is certain that They had still *other* Powers, which were not enumerated in either of those Catalogues. St. *Paul* in his 1st Ep. to the *Corinthians* reckoning up the many extraordinary Endowments variously distributed at that Time, takes Notice of some, which were not particularly mentioned by our Saviour in either of those forecited Passages: So that it is no Argument that the Apostles had not this Gift, merely because it was not peculiarly expressed in their Commission. If it appears from any other Part of Scripture that They were favoured with it, it will be no Objection that it is not mentioned in that Part. But it seems to be Mr. T's Endeavour to prove that it is not mentioned any where. It is plain, He says, that the Apostles had not this Gift, when they proceeded to the Choice of a Fellow-Apostle by Lot, and prayed to God as the only Searcher of Hearts, to direct the Event. This however is very little to the Purpose, because it was *before* the Descent of the

Holy Ghost upon them, who was to fulfil the Promises made unto them, to be the Principle of all *extraordinary* Endowments in them, and particularly of such an one, as should enable them to discover the Hearts of Others.

“ What looks most like this, He says, is the
 “ Story of *Ananias* and *Sapphira* ; but as an
 “ Estate cannot be bought and sold, without
 “ several Parties being privy to it, it is not
 “ unreasonable to suppose, that St. *Peter*
 “ might come at the Truth of the Matter
 “ without any Revelation more than was na-
 “ tural.” This is barely *possible*, but extreme-
 ly *improbable*, and from the Circumstances of
 the Case it seems very *unreasonable* to suppose it.
 As They *intended* this Fraud, They would
 certainly be as *secret* as possible in concealing
 the Terms of the Sale ; As the Purchasers
 were *Unbelievers*, it was not likely St. *Peter*
 should have Intelligence from *them* ; and the
 very *Manner*, in which He reproves the Cri-
 minals, intimates the Method in which their
 Crime was discovered, in that They had dared
 to attempt to impose upon the *Blessed Spirit*,
 who could not be imposed upon, and who
 had now brought to Light the secret Purposes
 of their Heart. *Why hath Satan filled thine*
Heart to lie to the Holy Ghost ? says the Apostle
 to *Ananias*,---*Thou hast not lied unto Men but*
unto God. And again to *Sapphira*, *How is*
it

it that Ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? This seems pointed to shew the *Folly* as well as *Wickedness* of attempting to impose upon *Omniscience*, which could so easily exhibit the most private Frauds to publick View, and bring the Authors of them to Confusion and Punishment. The same Power, which could *detect*, could *punish* them, and the extraordinary Act of Discipline ensuing was a Proof of the extraordinary Method in which the Crime was discovered. This Case was so plain, that this is the first Time that it has been mistaken, or that an Attempt has been made to evade the Miracle of the Discovery by a Suggestion of St. *Peter's* secret Intelligence. There is another Instance, I think, of the same Gift exercised by the same Apostle, as recorded in the 8th Ch. of the *Acts*, in Relation to the Case of *Simon Magus*. He had professed Repentance and Faith, and had been admitted into the Church by *Baptism*; but on seeing the *extraordinary Gifts* of the Holy Ghost conferred by the Laying on of the *Hands* of the Apostles, He offered them Money to be endowed with the same Privilege. St. *Peter* not only reproves Him for the Error of *thinking that the Gift of God might be purchased with Money*, but goes on to tell Him, that He knew more of Him than perhaps He knew of Himself; He tells Him, that *his Heart was*

not right in the Sight of God. He directs to Repentance and Prayer, that if his Offence was not yet beyond the Reach of Pardon, He might obtain it. *For I perceive*, says He, *the Original is ὁγῶ, I see that Thou art in the Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity.* This was more than appeared merely from the Overt-Act which occasioned the Remark, which might possibly have been a Mistake in Judgment, and not the Effect of so corrupt a Heart; but St. *Peter* was now enabled to discern the Secret Workings of his Mind, and to lay them open for the Publick Good, as *Irenæus* expresses it. These Instances would be the more readily allowed, if there was any Mention of such a Gift in any other Enumeration of extraordinary Endowments in any other Part of Scripture. Mr. *T.* seems to take it for granted that there is not; whereas I think, and the Generality of Commentators have always thought, that this Gift is expressly mentioned by St. *Paul* amongst other supernatural Gifts of the Holy Ghost. After the Mention of some other Endowments bestowed separately, the Apostle adds, *To Another the Working of Miracles, to Another Prophecy, to Another Discerning of Spirits, to Another diverse Kinds of Tongues, to Another the Interpretation of Tongues,* 1 Cor. xii. 10. *Irenæus's* Testimony cited on this Occasion seems to

to be a *Comment* on, or rather a *Transcript* of this very Text. “ We hear Many in the “ Church indued with Prophetic Gifts; “ speaking with all Kinds of Tongues; lay- “ ing open the Secrets of Men for the “ Publick Good, and expounding the Myste- “ ries of God.” However the *Discerning of Spirits* spoken of by St. *Paul* is plainly ranked by Him in the midst of supernatural Gifts, and cannot therefore be interpreted away by those Precepts which direct a *Trial of Spirits*, by the Analogy of Faith, or the actual Effects of Holiness and Virtue. This *Discerning of Spirits* is not only by the most obvious Sense of the *Expression*, but by the *Context* limited to some extraordinary Method of looking into the Hearts and Designs of Men. In this Sense may likewise very rationally be interpreted that difficult Text, 1 Cor. xiv. 32. that *the Spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets*; Meaning that the Designs of Those who made Pretensions to extraordinary Illumination, were by the Assistance of the Holy Ghost made known to Others, who were really so endued, by which Means Impostors might be detected, and genuine Claims be confirmed and made more useful. This appears farther from those Passages, wherein *Timothy* is said to be set apart for the Ministry according

*according to the Prophecies which went before
 on Him, 1 Tim. i. 18, and iv. 14, that is
 according to the Designation of Those, who
 by this Gift had declared Him a proper Per-
 son for this Office. Clemens Alex. adds, that
 St. John ordained such to the Care of the
 Asiatick Churches as were pointed out to Him
 by the Spirit. (Ep. Euseb. Lib. III. C. 23.)*
 There are other Instances of the like Kind in
 Ecclesiastical History, and these are recorded
 Proofs of the Exercise of this Gift, whereby
 Mens Hearts and true Characters were laid
 open for the Publick Good. But Mr. T.
 has an Objection from the *Nature of the
 Thing* as well as from what He deems the
Omission of it in the Sacred History. “ My
 “ Reason, says He, I confess, such as it is,
 “ leads me to believe, that God has always
 “ reserved this Point of Knowledge to Him-
 “ self. Man could never arrive at it by his
 “ own natural Abilities, and I meet with no
 “ certain Monument that it was ever com-
 “ municated to Man.” (P. 71.) That no Man
 could see into Another’s Heart by the
 Strength of his own *natural* Abilities, will be
 most readily allowed, but the Knowledge of
 Another’s Intentions was never communica-
 ted to Any Person by *extraordinary Revela-*
tion, is a very extraordinary Discovery. We
 have many Monuments of this in the in-
 spired

spired Writings. When God Almighty directed *Joseph* to flee into *Egypt with the Holy Child Jesus*, adding the Reason, that *Herod would seek the Young Child to destroy Him*, *Joseph* may then well be said to have known *Herod's Heart*; and whether this Knowledge was communicated by the *Appearance of an Angel* in a Dream, or by a more secret and *immediate*, but sure and well-known *Suggestion of the Holy Spirit* to his Spirit, makes no Difference in the Case. The Result would either Way be just the same. The Knowledge in both Cases would be by Revelation; The Gift would be supernatural, and the Event would be the Discovery of the Persecutor's Intention. In like Manner We may understand the Gift of *discerning Spirits* in the Primitive Church: Not that One Person had by a Kind of *Intuition*, a Knowledge of all that passed in Another's Breast; but that the Secrets of that Other were sometimes communicated by Revelation, in Cases where the Discovery of their great *Purity* or great *Malignity* concerned the Publick Good. Thus We may suppose, in the Instance before spoken of, that *St. Peter* knew not the vile Hypocrisy of *Simon Magus*, when He admitted Him to *Baptism*: But when He continued to carry on the same base Designs under the Profession of
 the

the Gospel, such a publick Discovery by Revelation of the *Naughtiness of his Heart*, might be useful and proper, and might therefore be then communicated to the Apostle. The *occasional, special Impulse* maintained by Dr. M. may here at least be presumed to be the Truth of the Case, and is a Supposition that will solve all Difficulties relating to it. Mr. T. allows that “ Nothing
 “ can be clearer than that our Saviour was
 “ possessed of this Gift in the fullest Man-
 “ ner, which, says He, I really look upon
 “ as no weak Argument of his Divinity.” Far be it from me to weaken any Argument which establishes that great, that important Truth; but I think the Scripture itself furnishes us with a plain Distinction, which will secure the peculiar Right of our Saviour to this extraordinary Talent of seeing into Mens Hearts, and the Argument thence arising for the Belief of his Divinity, without proving that it never was communicated in any Degree, or in any Instance to Others.

Jesus, says the inspired Writer, *knew all Men*, (no other ever pretended to that) *and needed not that Any, should testify of Man, for He knew what was in Man*, John ii. 24, 25. This was his peculiar Prerogative. He had this Talent *underived*, by Virtue of his own Nature and Attributes, and therefore it extended

tended to all Persons and Times, and He stood in no Need of any Testimony whatsoever; and This I perfectly agree with Mr. T. is an undoubted Proof of his true and real Divinity. All Others, in order to gain a certain Information, do stand in Need that Some *One should testify of Man*, and as No One can see the Heart of Man, but the *Omniscient Spirit*, which seeth all things, therefore without the particular Testimony of the Holy Spirit, no *infallible* Determination can be obtained. But with his immediate Assistance such Knowledge may be communicated, and on this Account This *discerning of Spirits* is properly represented as One of the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Holy Ghost. The Son of God, from whom with the Father proceedeth the Holy Spirit, had this omniscient Faculty in his own Right, and in its full Extent. When Men were favoured with it, it was in particular Cases, and that by *Communication*, and that *supernatural*; and it appears from Scripture, that Some were sometimes so favoured. Mr. T's Reasonings on the Primitive Fathers claiming a Gift, which the Apostles had not, fall of Course on the Discovery of the Mistake of the Principle on which He argued.

On the Gift of expounding the Scriptures I had observed that Dr. M. had advanced
Nothing

Nothing but what had been said before:
 “ And which, says Mr. T. I flatter Myself
 “ these Papers have already shewn to be
 “ very *insufficiently* answered.” Self-Flattery
 certainly will go a great Way; I shall leave
 Him to enjoy his own good Opinion, and
 shall leave the Decision of that Point to
 the Publick. Mr. T. adds, “ Some fresh
 “ Particulars however We do find here ad-
 “ vanced.” For my Part I do not find
 them. The only Remark under this Head
 tending to disprove that the Fathers claimed
 this Gift, is the Repetition of that Passage in
Justin Martyr, which was before examined.
 The general Insinuations concerning the In-
 fluence of Craft, or Enthusiasm, or Preju-
 dice, and the Story of Bishop *Fisher*, have
 no more Relation to the Gift of expound-
 ing the Scriptures, than to any other Part
 of the Book. Mr. T. gives another Reason
 for passing over these. “ We will forbear,
 “ says He, adding a farther Weight, till
 “ that already on is removed.” If this was
 the only Cause of his Forbearance, He
 need not have been so sparing and scrupulous.

The *Gift of Tongues* is the Last proposed
 to our Consideration. Mr. T. begins with Dr.
M’s concluding Remark, that the whole
 Credit of this depends on the single Autho-
 rity

rity of *Irenæus*. But if his Authority be good,
 if He stand as an unexceptionable Witness,
 this Circumstance alone will not invalidate
 his Testimony. It is to be considered in
 Conjunction with this Evidence, that our
 Saviour foretold it, that it subsisted in the
 Age just before, that the same Reasons sub-
 sisted for the Continuance of it; and these
 Circumstances concur to render the Testimo-
 ny of *Irenæus* highly credible. That Other
 Primitive Writers have not insisted on it, is
 no more an Objection to Him that has
 mentioned it, than it is against St. *Paul's*
 Evidence, that the other Writers of the
 Epistles in the New Testament have not
 taken Notice of this Gift in particular, or
 of the Continuance of Miracles in general.
 Neither will the Inference hold certain, that
this Gift vanished of a sudden, because the In-
 stances are not recorded of the Times, and
 Places, and Persons, in and by whom it
 was exerted. The same Argument would
 be of as much Force against the Use of
 it by the Apostles Themselves, because their
 Travels, and their Application of this Ta-
 lent to the Conversion of all Nations, are
 not particularly transmitted to Us. But Dr.
M's principal Objection to the Evidence of
 this Gift was this, that *Irenæus*, who was
 the only One that mentioned it, “ appear-
 “ ed

“ ed to be in great Want of it Himself
 “ for the Propagation of the Gospel in his
 “ own Diocese among the *Celtæ* or *Gauls*.”
 (*Free Inquiry*, P. 119.) It might be pre-
 sumed that this was a proper Occasion for
 the Exercise of such a Gift, and there-
 fore this looked like a plausible Objection;
 for if *Irenæus* Himself wanted it, where it
 would be particularly useful, this would be
 thought a Presumption against its Conti-
 nuance any where. To prove that *Irenæus*
 was thus destitute of this Gift, Dr. M. re-
 fers to Dr. *Cave*’s Interpretation of a Passage
 in that Author, as if He had complained,
 that *it was not the least Part of his Trou-
 ble, that He was forced to learn the Lan-
 guage of the Country; a rude and barbarous
 Dialect, before He could do any Good upon them.*
 I therefore took the Passage referred to at
 large into Consideration, and shewed that
 there was not the least Reference to any
 Trouble, or Difficulty, or Loss of Time, in
 his learning the Dialect, but that He spoke
 only of the *Nature* of the Language itself,
 and not of the *Manner* of his attaining it:
 For that what He said, was just as true,
 and as applicable to the Supposition of his
 having it by *supernatural* Infusion as by
natural Application. But Mr. *T.* says, that
 my Translation of the Passage does not
 shew

shew this, nay, that it fully confirms and
 establishes the Dr's Argument. " But You
 " will not, says *Irenæus*, expect from Us
 " who reside among the *Gauls*, and are
 " chiefly engaged in a barbarous Dialect,
 " any artificial Composition of Words which
 " We have not learned, &c."---" In what
 " Manner, says Mr. *T.* could He have ex-
 " pressed Himself to make it plainer that
 " He had learnt the *Celtick* Language in
 " some Degree, but not to Perfection; not
 " so as to be able to frame in it an ar-
 " tificial Composition of Words?"---The
 Words *in it* are an Addition of Mr. *T.*'s,
 not to be found either in the Original, or in
 Dr. *M.*'s Translation, It is an Addition
 which the Sense will not, cannot bear; be-
 cause *Irenæus* was not writing *in it*, in the
Celtick Language, but in *Greek*. This there-
 fore can have no Relation to his greater or
 less Knowledge of that Language, which
 in its highest Perfection He represents as
 barbarous; and observes that the habitual
 Use of such Dialect, where He resided,
 must preclude any Expectation from Him of
Elegance, or *Accuracy* in any Language.

But Mr. *T.* has a more extraordinary Ob-
 jection still. He says, " No Dialect can
 " with any Propriety be said to be bar-
 " barous in Respect to the Holy Ghost, to
 S " whom

“ whom all Dialects are equally easy, and
 “ perhaps equally smooth and harmonious.”
 Upon this Principle there was no Difference
 of *Purity* or *Corruption* in all those Tongues
 and Languages, which were supernaturally
 infused on the *Day of Pentecost*, because
 they were all derived from the Holy Ghost.
 But I presume, that if a Dialect was really
 barbarous in itself, or in Comparison with
 other Languages, the Attainment of it by
Inspiration instead of *hard Study*, did not
 make it otherwise. If such a Gift was
 given to enable a Missionary to preach the
 Gospel to People of a foreign Country, it
 must be given just in the Manner in which
 They used it; and if theirs was a barbarous
 and unpolished Language, it must be the
 very same in the Preacher to qualify Him
 to do Good among them. If the Holy
 Ghost by communicating it had refined
 and improved it, it would have been
 so much the less useful to the unimproved
 People amongst whom it was to be used,
 and the Alteration of the Dialect would
 have made it a *new and unknown Language*
 to them. There is therefore no Impropriety
 in talking of a *barbarous Dialect*, though it
 be supposed to be infused by the *Holy Spirit*,
 since on that Supposition it must be conform-
 able to the Speech of the intended Con-
 verts;

“ ing a Work on Dr. *M.* that does not belong
 “ to Him. He is no way, says He, con-
 “ cerned to prove that it was ceased,” that
 is, He is no way concerned to prove what
 the Title of his Book sets forth, and what the
 whole Drift of his Book is to prove.---Mr. *T.*
 adds, it is to be taken for granted that
 Miracles ceased with the Apostles; that they
 did not, is the “ Thing to be proved.”
 (P. 77.) I desire to take Nothing for
 granted, but shall insist that all the *pre-*
sumptive Evidence lies on the other Side,
 and disposes Us to give Credit to the ensu-
 ing Evidence in Favour of the Continuance
 of such miraculous Powers in After-Ages.
 Our Saviour promised them without limit-
 ing them to the Apostles, and in a Manner
 which not only *implied*, but *expressed*, that
 they should *hereafter* attend Those who
 should believe. We find by the inspired
 Writings, that they attended others besides
 the Apostles, and We meet with Directions
 concerning the Application of them to the
 Edification of the Church. We see the Use
 of them in the Conversion of Unbelievers,
 and the Support of Christians under Persecu-
 tions; and We know that those Reasons
 continued in full Force for the Continuance
 of such Powers in the Ages next succeeding
 the Apostles. If Any Thing is to be taken
 for

for granted, it will be, that such Gifts did continue, whilst the same Exigencies and Occasions did continue; unless some positive Proofs are brought to the contrary. Dr. *M.* plainly did not think, that this was a Work which did not belong to Him, but attempted in this very Instance to prove that the Gift of Tongues was ceased, because *Irenæus* wanted it, who, if Any, might be presumed to have it; and from the Ceasing of this Miracle in particular, He inferred that all others were ceased likewise. His Argument indeed failed in both Parts; but the Attempt shewed his Opinion, that it was proper to bring positive Proofs of their Discontinuance, to invalidate the Presumptions which would arise from the forementioned Circumstances in Favour of their longer Subsistence.

But We desire not to rest on these *Presumptive* Proofs only, or to give them more than their proper Weight in this Argument. We have a Cloud of Witnesses to attest the Truth of the actual Continuance of these Powers in the Church, and Dr. *M.* has saved Us the Trouble of collecting them. He has exhibited them in one View, and has owned that these Witnesses, “ as far as
“ their Authority reaches, have cleared this
“ Argument from all Obscurity, by their
“ strong, explicit, and repeated Attestations

“ of many extraordinary Gifts and miraculous Powers, which were constantly and publicly exerted in the Christian Church thro’ each succeeding Age.” (*Free Inquiry*, P. 10.) Till their Authority therefore can be invalidated, We are in Possession of positive Proofs on our Side of the Question, and Nothing has yet been brought against them sufficient to discredit their Character as Witnesses in such Facts as fell within their own Knowledge. But Mr. T. says, “ This can be proved no otherwise than “ by ascertaining Instances of their Continuance.” This is returning again to the old Objection of the Want of the Historical Specification of Names, and Times, and Places, on which enough has been said already, and need not be repeated every Time the Exception recurs. The Witnesses spoken of did not write *Histories* but *Apologies*, and the Method that They took of appealing to frequent Miracles, rather than to particular Instances, was very suitable to their Purpose, and sufficient to their Argument.

In assigning the Reason, why this Gift in particular might be withdrawn, and the rest continued, Mr. T. says “ I run as counter to the prevailing Opinion, as Dr. M. does in his general Supposition of *no Miracles* after the *Apostles*”. (P. 78.) This would

would have been Matter of much Surprise to me, if I had not already proceeded so far in the *Defence*, and seen so many Instances of this Gentleman's misapprehending the State of the Case. What led Him to such a Notion and Position in this Place, I have not the least Glimpse of Light to discern. In attempting to prove it, He makes use of my Account in Words very little different, and confirms my Opinion whilst He thinks He is opposing it. "The chief Intent of this Gift, says He, seems to be, not so much to convince Unbelievers by its own Evidence of the Authority a Person acts under, as to gain Admission into Discourse with them, and thereby furnish Him with Opportunities of producing his other Credentials." So said I, "The Gift of Tongues tho' as miraculous as any in itself, and particularly useful in enabling the first Preachers to speak to Persons of all Nations and Languages, yet was the least convincing of Any to Gainers, unless, as in the Case of the Apostles, They knew their Persons and Education beforehand." (*Free Answer*, P. 90, 91.) Now why This was not as true when I said it, as when Mr. T. repeated it, or why it ran more counter to the prevailing Opinion in my Words, than in his,

his, I cannot comprehend; nor why He thought We differed in this Particular. The general Account I think is this, that the Gift of Tongues was to enable the first Preachers of Christianity to speak to all Nations in their own Language, and therefore, as I observed, it was necessary only for *Missionaries*. As soon as any Converts were gained amongst the *Natives*, They could speak to their Brethren in their own Tongue, and needed not supernatural Assistance in this Particular to gain Admission into Discourse with them, whatever They might do in other Instances to work Conviction upon them. As the Apostles therefore dispersed Themselves over the World, their first Success prevented any farther absolute Necessity for this Gift as a *Means of Conversion*, and furnished them with Partners in this Holy Work, who could join in talking to their own Countrymen. Before that Christianity was so far established, as to be able to make the rest of its Way, by its own natural Strength, yet this Opening towards its future Success might be accomplished by the Conversion of some Few in Each Place, who might in their Mother Tongue attempt the Conversion of the Rest: And therefore this Gift, if this was its chief Intent, might very probably cease, whilst other miracu-

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lous Endowments still subsisted in their full Vigour. *Natural Means* might now be used for an Opportunity of speaking with Persons of all Languages, and thereby gaining an Opportunity of producing Credentials; tho' *supernatural ones* might still be necessary to exhibit and confirm those Credentials. This is an easy and rational Account according to the chief Use that is assigned for this Gift of Tongues, and I see not wherein Mr. T. and I differ from Each Other, or from the prevailing Opinion.

I see no Reason likewise, why I may not concur with Mr. T. in leaving it to the Reader to attend carefully to the Charge of *Inconsistency* brought by Dr. M. against St. *Chrysostom* and St. *Augustin*, and the Distinction by which I observed They cleared Themselves from the Charge. They thought the Establishment of Christianity prevented the Necessity of their Continuance as a Means of *converting Heathens*, but they thought that they were still sometimes wrought amongst the *Believers* for their *Edification* or *Support*. Suppose that They were mistaken or imposed upon in the latter, This however frees them from any *Self-Contradiction*, which was the Accusation here brought against them.

On

On Dr. *M*'s great Triumph over the History of *Simeon Stylites*, I observed that " it chiefly
 " depended upon a Connection of his own,
 " that *Simeon*'s supposed Miracles were
 " wrought in Justification of the Peculiarities of his History, which I observed
 " was not pretended by Those who believed and vindicated them." I entered not farther into the Consideration of that Case, because it lay beyond the Limits in Point of Time, with which I proposed to concern Myself; but if Dr. *M*. stated the Principal Objection upon a Mistake, this would be some Sort of Presumption, that other more material ones were wanting. However if Mr. *T*. is disposed to reject them in a Bundle, the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church till the Establishment of Christianity, is no ways affected by it, and whether this be admitted or not, the former will not be the less secure.

Mr. *T*. says He " perceives, that I think
 " Myself likewise obliged to defend the
 " Truth of the Story on which Dr. *Berri-*
 " *man* has insisted, concerning the Orthodox Christians of *Africa*, who are said
 " to have spoke *articulately and distinctly*,
 " after their Tongues had been cut out by
 " the Order of *Hunmeric the Vandal*." But
 how

how does it appear that I thought Myself *obliged* to do so? Might not I act upon the same Principle that Mr. *T.* did, who wrote a Book, not to decide the Question in Dispute, but merely to shew that Another Person had in his Opinion said Nothing to the Purpose? Might not I therefore offer those Remarks to shew, that Dr. *M.* at least had not disproved the Account, tho' I might not take upon me peremptorily to decide the Question? Indeed I thought it a proper Instance to shew, how far Zeal and Prejudice can carry Men of the greatest Abilities, when so acute a Reasoner as Dr. *M.* could seriously mention a Report from the Academy of Sciences at *Paris*, of a Girl who was born without a Tongue, who yet talked distinctly, as an entire Confutation of all the Evidence that Dr. *Berriman* had offered of the Miracle wrought on the *African* Confessors. This was likewise particularly applicable to Dr. *M.* because He was the *reputed* Author at least of the first Answer to Dr. *B.* wherein this was called " a Miracle of Miracles;" whereas now it seems there was Nothing at all Miraculous in the Case. Mr. *T.* does not attempt to defend this Objection, but only answers, that the same Historians related others, which are as much to be believed as this. By the Way,
those

those other Miracles were not so particularly *examined* as this, and therefore are not so strongly established ; but if the Belief of them followed from this, what is the absurd Consequence which would follow from thence ? They are not trifling, or ridiculous, or to no End and Purpose, nor is there any Presumption against their *Credibility* merely from the *Nature* of them.

Mr. *T.* has a farther Objection against this Miracle. He does not think the *Occasion* worthy of a miraculous Interposition. Had this Objection come from another Quarter, it had been more consistent and less surprising, but a Gentleman who is “ fully “ convinced that the *Arian* Explication is “ *false*,” could not have named another Question of equal Importance, wherein such a Decision might more reasonably be expected. Mr. *T.* says, “ All the Parties “ here concerned professed Themselves to be “ *Christians* ; they only differed in the Explication of a Doctrine, which both Sides “ allowed to be founded in the New “ Testament.” But this Doctrine about which *only* They differed, was that One, on which the Notion, the Importance, the Reality of our Salvation depend. The whole Scheme of our Redemption varies on the different Explication ; and the Doctrines, the Duties,

Duties, the Motives of Christianity are exalted or debased, as We embrace the one or the other of these Systems. Whether the Saviour of Mankind was *God*, or only a *Noble Creature*, was a Point of the highest Nature in itself, and on which the Meritoriousness of the Propitiation offered by Him must entirely rest; and if the Powers of Nature, which received their Existence and Force from Him, were not properly to be altered or reversed, to prove his real *Divinity*, No Occasion of greater Consequence can be assigned, on which a Miracle might be expected. More especially as Those who maintained the Truth, according both to Mr. T's Opinion and Mine, were *under Persecution* at that Time, the *Support of persecuted Believers*, as well as the *Conviction of Gainsayers* might be intended by this Event, and This is allowed in other Instances to be a reasonable and sufficient Ground for a miraculous Interposition. But Mr. T. thinks that

“ there have been always learned and pious
 “ Men, who have doubted of this Article,
 “ who most probably would not stand out
 “ against the clear Evidence of a Miracle;
 “ He thinks, it casts a Reflection on the
 “ Wisdom of God, as if He did Things by
 “ Halves, to suppose it necessary for Him
 “ to work Miracles in order to ascertain
 “ the

“ the Sense of the Scriptures ; and He thinks
 “ that it would destroy the universal Truth
 “ of that Proposition, that the Scriptures
 “ are sufficiently plain in all Things neces-
 “ sary to Salvation.” (P. 81, 82.) I dare
 say Mr. T. did not see the Consequences of
 these Positions, which would equally prove
 that there never was a Miracle, every Altera-
 tion, according to this Reasoning, implying a
 Reflection on the first Constitution of Things
 as if it was imperfect,---and that there was
 no sufficient Evidence for the Miracles of
 the Gospel, for there were Men, in all Ap-
 pearance, of Learning and Piety who stood
 out against them ;---and that there was no
 One Doctrine sufficiently plain in Scripture,
 for there is not one which has not been
 disputed. What are the secret Motives,
 which influence Mens Hearts in rejecting
 Facts or Doctrines, for which there is plain
 and sufficient Evidence, We are not, nor do
 We desire to be Judges ; but such Instances
 of rejecting them are no Proofs against
 that Plainness and Sufficiency. *Our Saviour’s*
Miracles were rejected by Many in whose
 Presence They were wrought ; The Doc-
 trine of *Baptism* is rejected by Many who pre-
 tend to believe the Scriptures ; but Mr.
 T. will not therefore say that either the One
 or the Other were not sufficiently attested.

But

But if We cannot, nor do pretend to judge of the private Motives influencing the *Hearts of Men*, much less do We presume to judge of all the Motives influencing the *Deity* in his Proceedings. We do not pretend to say, that it was *necessary* for Him to work Miracles in order to ascertain the Sense of the Scriptures, because We may have Evidence that He has done it in a particular Instance. He is no *necessary Agent*, but dispenses all his Blessings with great Variety. He grants Favours, both with Respect to *Knowledge* and *Practice*, to Some, which He denies to Others, and is Himself the only Proper Judge of Times, and Seasons, and Occasions of Interposing: We cannot infer that He must *always* do what He has *once* done, nor is it any Prejudice to the Evidence of that Interposition, that the Occasion was not prevented by irresistible Evidence formerly given. If We can shew that the Interposition was not *incredible*, it is all that is necessary on our Part; if We can point out the particular *Use* and *Benefit* of it, We do more than can be required of Us, and do strengthen and establish the external Evidence: And if the *Truth* and *Importance* of any Doctrine be a weighty Consideration, and worthy of the Divine Care and Protection, it cannot be urged
with

with greater Force in any Case than in this. Mr. T. will observe, that I have not entered into the Examination of the *Witnesses* with Respect to the Miracle before Us, (it being beside my present Question) but have only obviated his Objections against the Credibility of the Miracle itself, and have shewn, according to his own Expression, that “ it may be true, for ought Any Thing He “ has said to disprove it.”

The Elegance of the Phrase is very suitable to the Force of the Argument in the next Paragraph. “ Mr. D’s next undertaking, says Mr. T. is to lick a famous “ Passage of *Tertullian* into Shape:” And the decisive Sentence is, “ all the Plastick “ Art of ten Men more can never do it.” He then proceeds in a high Style of Contempt and Triumph on the Strength of his own declared Opinion. But Assertions prove Nothing. Let Us once more review the Passage, and the Reflections that on both Sides were passed on it. Dr. M. had charged the Primitive Fathers with having “ trained “ the Ages, in which They lived, to blind “ Credulity and Superstition, by teaching “ them to consider *the Impossibility of a “ Thing as an Argument for the Belief of it.*” (P. 186.) To support this Charge He brings a *single Sentence* from a *single Father*, which,
if

if it was as absurd as He would represent it, could never justify such a *general* Accusation. This Circumstance his *Defender* thought fit to drop; tho' if one incautious Sentence would fix such an Imputation upon a Whole Body of Men, No Characters could be secure; and this Charge in particular might be as strongly brought against the Modern as against the Ancient Apologists for Christianity. The eminently Learned and Pious Bishop *Beveridge* has fallen into the *same Train of Thought*, and almost the very *same Expression* that *Tertullian* did. Upon the Subject of the Holy Trinity He has these remarkable Reflections. " This I confess is a Mystery, which I cannot possibly conceive, yet 'tis a Truth, which I can easily believe; yea, *therefore* it is so true that I can easily believe it, *because* it is so high that I cannot possibly conceive it." Why because? Mr. *T.* will say, How could his not conceiving it be any Argument for the Truth of it? Let Us hear Him out. " For it is impossible, continues He, Any Thing should be true of the Infinite Creator, which can be fully expressed to the Capacities of a Finite Creature; And for this Reason, I ever did, and ever shall look upon those Apprehensions of God to be the truest, whereby We

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" appre-

“ apprehend Him to be the most incom-
 “ prehensible, and that to be the most true
 “ of God, which seems most impossible unto
 “ Us.” (*Private Thoughts*, Part I. Ar-
 ticle 3.) Would it now be a just and fair
 Representation, from a View of this Passage,
 to say that the “ Bishops or Divines of the
 “ Church of *England*, in the Seventeenth
 “ Century, trained up that Age to blind
 “ Credulity and Superstition by teaching
 “ them to consider the Impossibility of a
 “ Thing as an Argument for the Belief of
 “ it?” Or might not this be said with ex-
 actly the same Truth and Reason as Dr.
M. said it of the Primitive Fathers on the
 Strength of a like Passage in *Tertullian*? I do
 not say that the Bishop’s is not an unguarded
 Expression, but I say that a Man must take
 Pains to misunderstand the Design of it,
 and to charge Him with the Absurdity with
 which the Dr. has charged the forementioned
 Father. Bishop *Beveridge*’s Intent plainly
 was to signify, not that a real Impossibility
 was an Argument of Truth, but that the
 Subject Matter of Revelation must be sup-
 posed to be somewhat of an extraordinary
 Nature ;—that Doctrines relating to the Deity
 must be presumed to be far beyond our
 Comprehension ; and that if they were by
 Revelation represented to be such, they were
 on

on that Account not the less, but the more credible: Had our pre-conceived Opinions been right, He signifies that there would have been no Occasion for a supernatural Interposition for our Direction; somewhat therefore not only *different* from, but *contrary* to our former Reasonings might be expected in such a miraculous Manifestation of God concerning his Nature, or his Will; and if such Discoveries were found in his Word, as We should least have thought of by the Strength of our natural Reason, They were rather *confirmed* than *weakened* by that Consideration. These Reflections, which Bishop *Beveridge* used with Respect to the Doctrine of the *Ever-blessed Trinity*, are the very same which *Tertullian* applied to the History of the *Incarnation*, *Passion*, and *Resurrection* of the Son of God. He says, that they are the more sure and certain in a Christian's Account for the Objections which Unbelievers raised against them. Our Saviour had foretold his Disciples, that their Belief and Trust in Him would bring them into Shame and Disgrace with the Refined Reasoners amongst Men: St. *Paul* had prepared them for the same Trial by assuring them, that They must give up the Esteem of the World, if They would embrace and maintain the despised Doctrines of the Cross; for

that Reproach and Insult would certainly attend the Profession of them. The Prejudices of the *Philosophers* as well as of the *Vulgar* lay against them, and the highest Pretensions of Reason would be the strongest against these revealed Truths. A Believer was directed to *become a Fool*, (in the Opinion of the Wise Men of the World) that *He might be wise* indeed in admitting the Contents of Revelation. *For the Wisdom of this World is Foolishness with God.* The Event answered the Expectation raised by these Predictions and Admonitions. The Belief of the *Incarnation* of the Son of God, his *Crucifixion*, and triumphant *Return to Life*, brought on all the Disgrace and Insult which had been foretold, and were immediately represented as ridiculous, absurd, and even impossible. This Representation *Tertullian* considers as a Confirmation of their Truth, it being that which Believers were particularly taught to expect. He had expressly referred to those predictive Discourses of *Our Saviour* and of *St. Paul*, and this Completion of them He urges as a farther Proof of those Doctrines which They taught. As if He had said to his Adversary, “ You object to the *Incarnation* “ of the *Son of God* as in itself a *shameful Hy-* “ pothesis ; The Objection was foreseen, and “ I am taught to glory in that which is “ Matter

“ Matter of Ridicule with the Wits of the
 “ World :---The *Death* of this *Divine Person*
 “ by the painful and ignominious *Death* of
 “ the *Cross* is with You the very Height of
 “ *Foolishness* ; This answers likewise to what
 “ I was prepared to hear from You, and
 “ confirms the Credibility of that great Arti-
 “ cle :---His *Resurrection from Death* You
 “ represent as contrary to the Course of Na-
 “ ture, and therefore absolutely *impossible*.
 “ This again I know is the Method of
 “ Reasoning with those who call Themselves
 “ *Philosophers*, but your Prejudices against
 “ this Article were particularly guarded a-
 “ gainst, and this Point was confirmed the
 “ more clearly and securely by *Revelation*,
 “ on Account of that very Notion of Yours
 “ relating to the *Impossibility* of it.” This is
 very plainly the Course and Manner of *Tertul-
 lian’s* Argument, wholly depending on the
 Distinction of *Relying solely on their own Rea-
 son*, or of *admitting a Divine Revelation* de-
 signed to correct the Errors of Reason, and
 particularly declared in the Gospel to be con-
 trary to many of its Prejudices and Prepos-
 sessions. If you take these Sentences of *Ter-
 tullian* in this Light, and with a View to
 the different Principles of the Person to
 whom, and of Him by whom They were
 delivered, the former making his own na-

tural Light the Measure of all Truth, the latter confessing and urging the Evidence of a supernatural Interposition, This *Antithesis* gives Perspicuity and Force to his Observations, and renders the Sense of them rational and consistent, as in the foregoing Paraphrase. But if You consider them *without* a View to that *Antithesis*, and *without any Connection* with what passed immediately before them, then You do not take them as the Apologist delivered them. The Sentences are no longer *his* but *yours*, and You do not *find* the Nonsense, but *make* it. An *Hypothetical* Position, which is true and pertinent in its *Connection*, may become false and foreign if considered *abstractedly*; and that Preacher, who in the Times of Usurpation and Confusion, undertook to prove that All Believers were damned, urging that Text of St. Paul, *They also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished*; had as much Authority to say that That was the Apostle's Doctrine, as Dr. M. had to say that *Tertullian*, and the other Fathers, taught their Disciples to consider *the Impossibility of a Thing as an Argument for the Belief of it*. The Sentence cited in each Case was only one *imperfect Link* of a Chain and Reasoning, and this I before observed in the present Case; but Mr. T. found it easier peremptorily to *pronounce*

nounce the Passage to be absurd, than to *prove* it to be so, either by shewing that there was no such Antithesis and Connection as I had observed in the Introduction to it, or that they did not help to clear the Difficulty. He may now however find his Laconick Question, "Why Because?" more distinctly answered, and that there was not wanting a *Medium*, by which the *Impossibility* of a Thing in the Estimation of an Unbeliever might be the very Reason why it was rendered more *credible*, and even more *certain* to a Believer, on the Authority of Revelation, which was the very Distinction that *Tertullian* insisted on. And now, whether softer Terms than *Shocking and egregious Nonsense*, and a less invidious Turn than the Parallel of a *bigotted Adherer to the Popish Church*, might not have suited better with so impotent an Attack on a plain and rational Exposition of *Tertullian's* Discourse, without any Attempt of an Argument to invalidate it, I shall leave to Mr. *T's* Recollection. He begs Pardon, which He needs not, for insisting on the Liberty of judging for Himself, and He has my free Leave to judge not only *for* Himself, but *by* Himself: For I have not met with a single Person that, on an attentive Review of that Passage, has not acknowledged that the *Sense* of *Tertullian's* Argument was upon the whole intelligible and

consistent, however strange the *Expression* might appear by itself.

The Last Part of the *Free Inquiry* was intended to obviate the Objections, which the Author foresaw would be made to his new Scheme. The First of these was that “ the
 “ Authority of the Books of the New Testa-
 “ ment, which were transmitted to Us thro’
 “ their Hands, would thereby be rendered
 “ precarious and Uncertain.” The Dr. makes two Replies on this Part of the Argument ; the first is, that “ the Authority of these
 “ Books does not depend on the Faith of the
 “ Fathers ; but on the general Credit and
 “ Reception which they found with all the
 “ private Christians of those Ages, whose
 “ Interest it was to preserve them, and whose
 “ Religious Regard for them, besides the
 “ Jealousy of Parties, did excite their Care
 “ to preserve them.” I answered that the Exception would lie at least as strong against private People as against the Publick Teachers, for if their Credulity and Superstition, or Craft, were so great, as to disqualify them for Witnesses in Matters of Fact, and their concurrent Testimony was to be rejected in a Case, in which they could not be deceived, the Objection would recur with Respect to Those who were taught by them, whose Principles and Practices could not be supposed to be
 better

better than those of their Teachers, nor consequently their Testimony more worthy of Regard. I added particularly, that this Method of resting the Authority of the Sacred Canon on the Reception of it by Private Persons, was in a great Measure weakened by the Account of those Difficulties suggested by Himself, concerning the Circulation of Copies at that Time; “when,” says Dr. M. “there were no Books in the World, but “what were written out by Hand, with “great Labour and Expence, the Method of “publishing them was necessarily very slow, “and the Price very dear; so that the Rich “only and Curious would be disposed or able “to purchase them, and to such also it was “often difficult to procure them, or to know “even where they were to be bought.” (*Free Inquiry*, P. 198.) This was his Account, when it answered another Purpose, and as far as it was true, would hold as strongly with Respect to the *Scriptures* as to the *Apologies* of the Primitive Fathers; and if this was the Case, and if farther, the Christians were that poor, mean, despicable People, even in the third Century, that Dr. M. represents them to be, then there could not be such numerous Copies of the New Testament dispersed amongst private Believers, as might secure their Authenticity and Purity, independently

pendently on the Testimony of the Fathers. The chief Copies must, according to this Account, be in the Hands of the chief Apologists and Governors of the Church; and if They were so “credulous and superstitious, and so little scrupulous of any Arts or Means to propagate their Opinions,” as They are described to be, We can have no Security, that the Scriptures are transmitted to Us genuine and uncorrupted. Mr. *T.* says here, it is proper to remind me of a Circumstance, which He thinks I seem to have forgot; namely, “that Dr. *M.* has endeavoured to make it appear, that the immediate Successors of the Apostles made no Pretensions at all to Miraculous Gifts; that the first Time We hear of any such Claim is in *Justin Martyr’s* first Apology presented about the Year of Christ 140; consequently that there is a Vacancy of more than Half a Century, wherein the Fidelity of the Teachers and Governors of the Church is liable to no Suspicion: And He presumes that it is shewn in the Beginning of his Papers, that I have not evinced the Dr. of any Mistake in this Article.” (P. 85.) I will not repeat what has been said on that Article, nor repeat, in Mr. *T.’s* Manner, my own Opinion by Way of Argument, but shall leave that Matter to the Judgment of the Reader;

Reader ; it may however properly be added, that were this Observation true, yet the Difficulties urged by Dr. *M.* concerning the Dispersing of Copies in so much later an Age, would be still of Force against the Supposition of there being a sufficient Number of those Copies dispersed in half a Century, as that the succeeding Fathers could not corrupt them, if They had so much Craft and so little Integrity as to attempt it ; which is the Substance of their Character as drawn by Dr. *M.* Farther, that Author lays great Stress on the *Credulity* and *Superstition* of the Fathers as discrediting their Testimony in any Case, and He has not cleared even the Apostolical Fathers from that Charge. Their *Fidelity alone* will not, on his Principles, secure their Testimony in such a Case, nor convince Us that They delivered down the genuine Books of the New Testament to Us. There is no express Testimony to their Advantage in this Point of *Judgment*, or *Care* to prevent Impositions, and the Insinuations thrown in suggest the contrary. “ They appear, says Dr. *M.* to have been Men of great Piety, Integrity, and Simplicity ; and That is all I think, which We need to declare of them “ on this Occasion.” (*Free Inquiry*, P. 27.) The Reason given for the Omission of the other Parts of their Character was, that
 They

They bore no direct Testimony to the Question concerning Miracles ; so that We do not know Dr. *M*'s Opinion whether They were proper Judges to settle and transmit the Canon of the New Testament, or whether He will accept of this Suggestion of Mr. *T*. in his Favour. This I think All must allow, that it must be easier to determine concerning the Reality of the Continuance of Miracles amongst them, than concerning the Genuineness of doubtful Books, when spurious ones were actually written, and sometimes received for a Time in particular Places. The latter Judgment must require more Industry and more Penetration than the former ; and therefore if general Imputations of *Credulity* and *Superstition* will invalidate positive Testimonies in the Case of *Miracles*, much more in the *Traditional* Delivery of the Authenticity of Books : And the Authority of the Sacred Canon and the Characters of the Fathers will still be found to be closely connected.

Dr. *M*. replies farther, that if the Objection was true, it would not prove his Argument to be false. “ If the Authority of the “ Scriptures should really be weakened by “ his Character of the Fathers, Who can “ help it ? If the Charge be confirmed by “ Facts, it must be admitted as true, how “ far

“ far soever the Consequences may reach.” (*Free Inquiry*, P. 192, 193.) This I thought was speaking quite out, and accordingly charged it as *inconsistent* in the Mouth of a *Professed Christian*. One of that Character would, I thought, have startled at the Consequence, and would have been willing to suspect some Fallacy in an Argument which would end in such a Conclusion. A *Believer* and *Teacher* of the Christian Religion might well have been expected to guard carefully against such a Consequence, and to express more Regard for the Authority of Scripture than for a new and peculiar Opinion. But Dr. M. is, not by secret Insinuation, but by open Profession, willing to give up every Thing rather than his new Scheme, and to hazard all rather than not establish his own Discovery. Mr. T. neither *defends* nor *blames* this Indifference expressed towards the Support of this Authority of the Sacred Canon, but thinks it sufficient to observe that “ All Truths are co-incident ;” that if “ the Primitive Miracles were really not true, there can be no Danger in discarding them ;” that “ Christianity may be *kept on its Legs* without them,” and that “ the Author of that Religion can never desire to have it supported by Falsehood.” (P. 86.) Now tho’ the Truth of all this be allowed, yet it does not in the least

least clear Dr. *M.* of *Inconsistency* in professing to *believe*, and undertaking to *teach* the Doctrines of the Scriptures, whilst He insists that it would be no Prejudice to the Force of his Argument, tho' it should be thought to end in undermining the Authority of those Scriptures. "All Truths are certainly coincident," and therefore such Truths, if such there be, as would overthrow the Credit of the Gospel, must, if We are consistent, end in converting Us to Heathenism. If indeed Christianity itself be not really true, there can be no Danger in discarding it, but a Man must be *self-condemned*, who professes it, whilst He advances Principles which He may see will end in overthrowing it. Christianity may likewise be *kept on its Legs*, as Mr. *T.* expresses it, without the Belief of the Continuance of Miracles in the Primitive Church; but the very Point in View was, the Supposition that it could not, at least that the Scripture, which is the Rule of it, could not; and yet in this Case Dr. *M.* says, that it would be no Prejudice to his Argument; for that if his Charge against the Fathers was confirmed by Facts, it must be admitted as true, *how far soever the Consequences may reach*. This was the Light in which *Inconsistency* was charged on the Doctor, in that Part of the *Free Answer*, not merely that his Principles would weaken
the

the Authority of the Sacred Canon, (for that might have been the Consequence, and He might not have been aware of it) but in his looking calmly on that *supposed* Consequence, and yet insisting that his Argument was not the less true. But this State of the Case Mr. T. either mistook, or chose to overlook, and has only advanced some general Truths, which may very innocently be admitted, without Danger of any ill Consequence.

The Second Objection that Dr. M. endeavoured to guard against was This, that “ All
 “ Suspicion of Fraud in the Case of the Pri-
 “ mitive Miracles seems to be precluded by
 “ that publick Appeal and Challenge, which
 “ the Christian Apologists make to their Ene-
 “ mies the Heathens, to come and see with
 “ their own Eyes the Reality of the Facts
 “ which They attest.” This the Doctor evaded by observing, that They had not the proper Opportunities of publishing and making known their Apologies;---that They were a poor, mean, despicable Sort of People, that Men of Figure and Fortune could not be supposed to pay any Attention to; and that it could not be expected that Governors *then*, any more than *now*, would pay any Sort of Regard to such Pretensions. I observed in Answer, that such Suggestions were contradicted by *Fact*, by the *Histories* and *Apologies*
 of

of those Times, by the Concessions of Dr. *M.* Himself in other Places, and by the Regard which even at this Time was paid to inferior Pretensions. But This Evasion, on which Dr. *M.* rested the Whole of his Answer to this very material Objection, is passed over in entire Silence by Mr. *T.* without any Attempt of strengthening the Dr's Reply, or refuting mine. He neither *justifies* nor *gives up* those abusive Accounts of the Primitive Christians, nor offers to confirm the Dr's Assertion, that their Apologies could not reach the Ears, or were not worthy the Notice of their Governors. He refers Us only to his Reflections on the Case of *ejecting Dæmons*, to which and the Examination of them, I may refer also.

He adds however, that “ in Case the Heathens did Themselves admit the Notion of *Possessions*, the Appeal was very properly and acutely made by the Apologists, because it was contending with them upon their own Principles.” (P. 87.) This is very true, if their Notion was well grounded; but there could be neither *Propriety* nor *Acuteness*, in *opposing one Cheat to Another*, as Dr. *M.* represents this Case; for had They given the Heathens such an Opportunity of detecting them in their principal Claim, what an Imputation must They necessarily have brought

brought on the *Genuineness* of former Miracles said to be wrought in Defence of this Religion, and on the *Sincerity* of the present Professors and Teachers of it? They could not have given their Enemies a greater Advantage than by making such false Pretensions, merely in Accommodation to an Error of theirs; and indeed the Manner in which They offered this Claim, insisting that They would make the Devils own their Nature, is an unanswerable Proof that this was not the Case. Dr. M. had indeed a farther Scheme in Reserve to evade this obvious Remark and the Force of it; for He represents it, as if They *kept Numbers of these Dæmoniacs in Pay, always ready for the Shew*; and then by *Confederacy* such Confessions might easily be obtained. What Degree of implicit Faith Dr. M. *expected* in his Readers, it is not easy to say, but certainly This Part of his Inquiry *required* a great Share of it. The first Reference to those Apologies, wherein these Appeals are made, must convince Us, that neither the *Time*, nor *Place*, nor *Manner* of their Challenges can possibly admit of this Construction. They challenged their Adversaries to bring Any One whom Themselves knew to be possessed; to bring Him before their own Tribunals, and They should see Him instantly dispossessed by any common

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Christians:

Christians : And these Proposals were made very early, long before any such Regulations took Place as Dr. *M.* refers to, whereby He thinks They might be always ready for the Shew. Mr. *T.* adds, that “ if the Heathens “ did not admit the Notion of Possessions, “ then ’tis no Sort of Wonder that They paid “ no Regard at all to it.” This Supposition is entirely imaginary, and if it was not, would not clear the Difficulty for which it is intended as a Solution. That the Heathens admitted the Notion of Possessions, and had Exorcists amongst them that pretended to cure them, is allowed and even insisted on by Dr. *M.* and is clear from the Testimonies and Arguments of the Primitive Writers. But suppose They had not, their Neglect cannot invalidate the positive Testimony of the Fathers ; all Suspicion of Fraud in *them* is precluded by these their frequent Appeals and Offers of submitting their Claim to publick Examination, whether Others would examine into them or not. Neither is it certain or probable, that the Heathens would pay no Regard at all to these Pretensions, if They did not admit the Notion of Possessions. If They rejected the Opinion of the Power of the *Devils* over the Bodies of Men, They must then suppose the Cases spoken of to be owing merely to *natural Distempers*, and if,

whilst

whilst They were under this Persuasion, the Christians assured them that *these* were *real Possessions*, and that They would prove them to be such by *casting out the Devils* in their Presence, and forcing them by the Name of *Jesus* to declare what They were, the very *Novelty* of such Pretensions, according to this Supposition, would have excited the Curiosity of many, and very probably have raised as much Attention and Desire of Examination as any other Motive whatsoever. Besides, the Relief would have been the same to the afflicted Sufferers, whether their Sufferings were owing to *natural* Disease, or the *preternatural* Operations of Evil Spirits; and on this Account such a Proposal could not fail of creating some Regard for the Sake of the beneficial *Effect*, whatever different Opinions were entertained concerning the *Cause* of the Malady. This Consideration obviates the very *Supposition* of a general Neglect of such a Claim, and as to the *Reality* of the *Possessions*, which Mr. T. here again declares to be *improbable*, That may be left to what has been already offered on that Subject.

The third Objection repeated and examined by Dr. M. was This, “ that no Suspicion of
 “ Craft can reasonably be entertained against
 “ Persons of such exalted Piety, who exposed
 “ Themselves to Persecution, and even to

“ Martyrdom in Confirmation of the Truth
 “ of what They taught.” He endeavoured
 to obviate this by observing that Religious Zeal
 is apt to bias Men in Favour of Any Thing
 that is thought useful to it; and that Martyr-
 dom might be owing to many other Motives
 than a mere Principle of Duty. I replied dis-
 tinctly to these Suggestions; but here Mr. T.
 leaves the Dr. again, and instead of attempting
 to *defend* some exceptionable Passages under
 this Head, goes off to a *Parallel* between the
 Testimony of the *Primitive Fathers*, and of
 the present *Members of the Romish Church* with
 Respect to this Point of *Miracles*. He ob-
 serves, that there are in this most corrupt
 Church many excellent Men, and whether
 We suppose them to be imposed upon Them-
 selves in this Article, or endeavouring to im-
 pose upon Others, either Way the same Ac-
 count may be given of the most early Writers,
 consistently with the Belief of their general
 good Character. “ If the Papists, says He,
 “ do really believe the History of Miracles as
 “ it is continued in their own Church, then a
 “ Number of learned and able Men may be
 “ deluded and imposed upon. But if They
 “ do not believe it, the Consequence will
 “ then be, that pious and good Men, such
 “ as would not scruple to lay down their
 “ Lives upon the general Question of their
 “ Religion,

“ Religion, may for what They think *Reasons of Expediency*, concur in countenancing
 “ and propagating of Falshood.” (P. 91.)
 This *Parallel* was obviated beforehand, and the Difference between the two Cases shewn in several considerable Circumstances, in different Parts of the *Free Answer*. Let Us however review them on this Occasion.

We will first take the Supposition, that the *Papists* do believe the History of their own Miracles, and if so, says Mr. T. “ then a
 “ large Number of learned and able Men
 “ may be deluded and imposed upon.” There are two very material Articles in this supposed Case different from that of the *Primitive Fathers*. The *Papists* are taught this Belief of Miracles in their earliest Infancy, and are not allowed a *free Inquiry* into them in their riper Years; so that with original Prepossessions in their Favour, and without Opportunity of proper Examination afterwards, 'tis highly probable that They *may give Credit* to the Pretence of Miracles, notwithstanding their Learning and Abilities in other Respects. The very Reverse of this was the Case of those Writers, whose Testimony is now called in Question. Most of the *Apologists*, who relate and vindicate this Claim in the Primitive Church, were so far from having their *first Instructions* in Favour of these Miracles, that

the Prejudices of their Education lay against all such Pretensions amongst the Christians. They were forced to give up their first Notions, and cross all the Opinions instilled in their Childhood, before They could learn to think favourably of this Cause, or of the Evidence of it. Nothing but a full Examination of such Evidence, and a clear Conviction of the Reality of it, could have induced them to change the *persecuting* for the *persecuted* Side, and when they afterwards maintained the same Pretensions Themselves, by a thorough View of which they had been brought over to the Acknowledgment of the Gospel, there was not a Possibility of their not knowing whether there was any just Ground for such Pretensions or not. Can the Faith then of such Converts with Respect to the Continuance of Miraculous Powers amongst them, be justly parallel'd with That of Those, who owe their *Faith* merely to *Instruction*, who were taught this Belief before They were arrived at the use of Reason, and were denied the Opportunity of exercising it afterwards? Can there be a greater Absurdity with Respect to the *former*, than that Account given by Mr. T. as the most favourable one, that " They believed them all upon
 " the Reports of common Fame, without
 " examining into their Foundation, or having
 been

“ been assured of their Truth in a single Instance upon a Testimony of their own Senses?” (P. 72, 73.) Or is Any Thing more credible than that This is the very Truth of the Case, with Respect to the Latter? The Former had never been Christians at all, if They had trusted in the Reports of common Fame; The Latter think themselves the better Christians for such credulous Trust in those Reports, and esteem an implicit Faith, without Examination, meritorious.

Again, the Primitive Christians offered those Claims, which They maintained, to *publick Examination*. They not only believed them Themselves, but They offered them as Evidences for the Conviction of Unbelievers. This is not only a Proof of their *Sincerity*, but of their *Judgment*, and of the *Care*, which They had taken to know the Truth and Foundation of these Pretensions; for They would never have staked the Safety of their Lives, and the Success of their Religion, upon a Claim which They had received only upon the Reports of common Fame. Do the *Papists* do the same? Do the Men of Learning and Ability in the *Romish Church*, whom at present We suppose to *believe* these Things Themselves, propose them to the *free Inquiry of Protestants*? Do They call upon these reputed Hereticks to come and be Witnesses to

their Miraculous Powers, and to sift as narrowly as They please, into the Foundation of them? If They did, We might presume that They had looked well into this Matter, before They put it to the Test, and hazarded so much on the Consequence of it; but as They do not, it may be presumed that They have embraced the whole Account *implicitly*; and their Faith in this Point, not built on any Examination in Themselves, much less offered to the Examination of Others, is in no Degree to be parallel'd with the Belief and Report of the Primitive Christians as to the Continuance of Miraculous Powers amongst them, which had both those Advantages; which was owing in them to *Personal Conviction* against former Prejudices, and was proposed for the same End to the *Inquiry* of the most prejudiced and sagacious of their Adversaries.

Let Us next Suppose that wise, and otherwise good Men, in the Romish Church, do *not believe* the History of Miracles, as it is continued amongst them, yet choose to countenance the Notion, and support a Pious Fraud for the Sake of some supposed good End to be served by it, then says Mr. T. it will follow that “ Pious and Good Men, such
 “ as would not scruple to lay down their
 “ Lives upon the general Question of their
 “ Religion, may for what They think *Reasons*
 “ *sons*

“ *sons of Expediency*, concur in countenancing
 “ and propagating of Falshood.” And This
 He would have Us understand to be as ap-
 plicable to the Members of the Primitive
 Church before the Establishment of Christia-
 nity, as to the Members of the present Ro-
 mish Church since the Establishment of Po-
 pery; and *thinks He has done the former no*
Injury by the Comparison. For my Part I
 think the *Comparison* greatly *injurious* as well
 as *erroneous*. I make no more Doubt than
 Mr. T. does, that there are still many excel-
 lent Men in the Romish Communion, but
 upon the Supposition now before Us, I make
 no Scruple to say that They are not so Good
 in that Communion as They would have
 been out of it. They are corrupted in Part
 by the corrupt Church of which They are
 Members, and if They will, notwithstanding
 all their Goodness, countenance a known
 Fraud out of a Notion of Piety, if They are
 even taught to do so by the Doctrines esta-
 blish’d amongst them, yet such Practice will
 ever remain *indefensible*; and they are pitiable
 as well as blameable in being misled by such
 authoritative Rules and Examples. They are
 in this Respect under a Disadvantage which
 the Primitive Christians were entirely free
 from. They knew no such Distinction, nor
 acknowledged any Rule of Faith or Practice
 different

different from or equal to the Holy Scripture. They knew the inspired Writings forbid the *Doing Evil that Good might come*, and They knew of no Authority which could reverse that Doctrine. They had no *Council of Trent* to misguide them, nor allowed of any Power which could dispense with moral and religious Obligations, or which could evacuate or alter the Word of God. If They did *wilfully prevaricate*, and maintain Claims which They knew had no Foundation, They must be absolutely *abandoned*; and no Scheme or Parallel can reconcile their supposed Piety with such a Practice. They could not plead the loose Casuistry of their Governors, nor a Mistake in Judgment owing to a blind Obedience to Ecclesiastical Determinations, as the well-meaning Papists may do; but if They were Guilty of Forgery at all, it must be with great Aggravations, in Opposition to their Doctrines and to their Consciences. They must necessarily be *more blameable* than the Patrons of Pious Frauds in the Church of *Rome*, who may think themselves right in such a Practice, which the Primitive Christians could not do. We must therefore give up their *Sincerity* or allow their *Testimony*, for the same Distinction will not save their Credit, which may be pleaded in Favour of the misguided Romanists. No such loose Morality,

or

or unsound Casuistry, as That of maintaining *Pious Frauds*, prevailed in the early Ages, but We must on one Supposition or other make the Characters of the First Apologists consistent. Either They were *Imposters*, who wickedly attempted to deceive Mankind with *false* Pretensions; or their Pretensions were *real*, and their Claim to Miraculous Powers sure and well grounded. Here therefore the Objection against Dr. *M*'s Scheme recurs in its full Force, that “ no Suspicion of Craft can “ reasonably be entertained against Persons “ of such exalted Piety, who exposed Them- “ selves to Persecution, and even to Martyr- “ dom in Confirmation of the Truth of “ what They taught.” This proves their *Sincerity*; and their Sincerity supposed, the *Reality* of their Claims will follow of Course, for They had no such false Doctrines or prevaricating Arts amongst them to deceive themselves, or to induce them to the Attempt of deceiving Others.

There is still Another very material Difference between the Assertors of Miraculous Powers in the *Primitive Church*, and Those in the present *Romish Communion*, which will utterly destroy Mr. *T*'s intended Parallel. He says, the Supposition that the Latter do not believe their own Pretence of Miracles, is a Proof that even good Men, Confessors and Martyrs,
may

may for *Reasons of Expediency* concur in countenancing and propagating of Falshood. Now the *Reasons of Expediency* in the Romish Church are very visible. They have an *usurped* Power to maintain, and many *gainful* Superstitions to support, and the Propagation of the Belief of Miracles aids the Continuance of many *additional* and many *absurd* Doctrines and Practices, which could not stand the Test of Reason and Scripture. Their Belief that the outward Splendor of their Church, and the Authority of their Supreme Head, are the greatest Good to be consulted upon Earth, with their forementioned Opinion, that all Means are lawful which conduce to this End, may easily lead them to think it *expedient*, that these should be promoted even by a groundless Pretence to Miraculous Powers, which, Humanly speaking, could scarce be supported any other Way. But the Question is, what like *Reasons of Expediency* had the Primitive Christians to prevaricate in this Manner, and to countenance and propagate a Falshood? They had none of these *temporal* Advantages to tempt them to it. They had no such external Pomp of Worship, no infallible Head, no lucrative Arts founded on false Doctrines, to support by this Pretence. They had no Personal Views, no Self-Esteem, or appropriated Ho-
nours

nours to secure by this Claim, as appears by that very Circumstance which has been turned into an Objection against them, that They seldom take any Notice, never any particular Notice of *themselves*, but choose rather to dwell on the Attainments of their *meanest Brethren*, and represent the Argument in its strongest Force by insisting on it with Respect to *them*. In short, They had Nothing but Truth to maintain, and That, as Mr. T. observes, can never want the Assistance of Falshood. They would not only have obhorred the Use of *such Means* to promote *any End*, but They really had *no such End* to promote at all by *any Means*. False Pretensions might do them infinite Prejudice, but could do them no possible Service. All the *Reasons of Expediency* as well as of Duty and Obligation, lay on the Other Side, and would determine them to avoid all groundless Claims. Their Personal Security, and the Success of their Endeavours in propagating the Gospel, as well as their Salvation hereafter, according to their own Doctrine, all depended on their *Fidelity* in speaking the Truth to the best of their Knowledge, and making no such Pretensions, unless they were indeed well-grounded. If They were detected, They brought sure Destruction on Themselves upon the very Terms of their own Proposal, and such a heavy

heavy Scandal and Imputation on the Religion which They professed, as would darken and discredit all the other Evidences of it, and of Course hinder the Propagation of it; and in Consequence of this were hurried by a speedy Vengeance here to account before their Master for such heinous Abuse of his Holy Name and Doctrine. All this Guilt and Hazard They are supposed to incur, for What? For Nothing; for no imaginable Reason which can be assigned for so wicked and foolish an Attempt. A bare *Possibility* of it is suggested, because an Instance may be given of other Men of different Principles and Practices, and in a different Situation, who are supposed to countenance *Pious Frauds*, consistently with a very good and pious Intention in general. Whereas the true State of the Case, upon Examination, appears to be this. The *Primitive Christians*, if They wilfully falsified, could expect Nothing but to suffer Death here, and everlasting Punishment hereafter; and considering the Vigilance, and Malice, and Sagacity of their Enemies, They could scarce fail of being discovered and exposed by Men as well as by the Searcher of Hearts. Whereas the *Papists*, according to their Management and their Notions, are safe in both Respects in such an Attempt. They are sure, in the Manner They claim
and

and exercise their Miraculous Powers, of not being detected, and Those amongst Themselves who suspect the Reality of them, dare not own their Suspicions: Or if They were accidentally detected, They have no Punishment, and but little Shame to fear, since the Merit of a *good Intention* would be their Plea and Excuse, and the Doctrine of their Church would justify the Lawfulness of the Fraud. The same Doctrine is a Guard against all Apprehension of future Vengeance for such an Attempt; and thus They have both secular and spiritual Considerations to bias their Judgment, and influence their Conduct, in the Patronage of pious Frauds, which are no way applicable to the Case of the *Primitive Fathers*. Yet This is the boasted Parallel, introduced with such Solemnity as if it was decisive; brought on gradually by preparatory Interrogatories, like some great Discovery, which was to solve the whole Difficulty, and reconcile the gross Inconsistency of charging those Holy Martyrs of most exalted Piety with wilful Prevarication, and a deep premeditated and continued Forgery. Whereas the only Point in common between those Early Advocates for Popery, and the Members of the Romish Church at this Day is the external Profession of Christianity: Their Notion of its *Doctrine* is as contrary as Light and

and Darknefs, and They differ in every other Respect which could have supported the intended Parallel. Their Opinions with Regard to this very Point of *doing Evil that Good may come*; and supporting Truth by a well meant Fraud, were absolutely contradictory; Their Thoughts of implicit Obedience to Ecclesiastical Authority against the plain Rules of the Gospel were widely repugnant; Their Manner of proposing their Claims to Examination were totally different; Their Inducements and *Reasons of Expediency* were directly opposite; nor can Any Case be proposed, wherein there was a greater Variety of all the material Circumstances.

The Last Objection proposed, with the Intent of obviating it, by Dr. M. was, that
 “ to reject the unanimous Testimony of the
 “ Fathers, in their Reports of the Primitive
 “ Miracles, will destroy the Faith and Credit
 “ of all History.” I took into Examination all the Heads of the Dr’s Answer, and shewed that they did not clear his Scheme of this Objection. Mr. Toll on this Occasion observes his usual Method, and instead of entering into the *Argument*, vouchsafes to give us his *Opinion*. He “ claims the Privilege of thinking that
 “ Dr. M. has so fully and solidly refuted this
 “ Objection, that Nothing can be added to
 “ make it clearer :---And adds, that tho’ I
 “ have

“ have given a copious Reply, the Pertinency of it, or of any Part of it, is far from being clear to Him.” (P. 92.) It may be so, but I may claim the Privilege likewise of observing that the Censure intended, if it were of any Force, would fall on Dr. M. If my Reflections on this Head were not pertinent to the Subject, His must suffer the same Imputation, for I followed him closely in his Remarks on this Point. I will review them once more on this Occasion.

His principal Distinction was, that “ the History of Miracles is of a Kind totally different from that of common Events, the One to be suspected always of Course, without the strongest Evidence to confirm it; the other to be admitted of Course without as strong Reason to suspect it;---that a Weak Man, who if Honest, may attest common Events, as credibly as the Wisest, yet can hardly make any Report, that is credible, of such as are miraculous, because a Suspicion will always occur, that his Weakness and Imperfect Knowledge of the Extent of Human Art, had been imposed upon by the Craft of cunning Jugglers; that on the other Hand, should a Man of known Abilities and Judgment relate to Us Things miracu-

“ lous, or undertake to perform them
 “ Himself, the very Notion of his Skill,
 “ without an Assurance also of his Integrity,
 “ would excite only the greater Suspicion
 “ of Him ; especially if He had any Interest
 “ to promote, or any favourite Opinion to
 “ recommend, by the Authority of such
 “ Works : because a Pretension to Miracles
 “ has in all Ages and Nations, been found
 “ the most effectual Instrument of Impostors,
 “ towards deluding the Multitude, and gain-
 “ ing their Ends upon them.” (*Free Inquiry*,
 P. 217, 218.) And He goes on in the fol-
 lowing Pages, on the Strength of these Prin-
 ciples, to observe that Men may and do, in
 the Perusal of all ancient Histories, readily and
 consistently reject all the *miraculous Part*,
 and admit the Rest. Now before I consider-
 ed the Substance of this Reasoning, I observ-
 ed, that it was in general a Concession, that
 the History of Miracles, tho’ not of common
 Events, would be hurt by his Arguments ; and
 tho’ He is not disturbed about it, “ how far
 “ soever the Consequences may reach,” yet
 it appeared to me to be a Concession, which
 might reasonably alarm all sincere Christians.
 It was putting in the Mouths of Unbelievers
 such an Objection to the History of the Gos-
 pel, as I thought might well excite the At-
 tention and Concern of all who believe that
 History,

History, and who think the Welfare of Mankind depends upon the Belief of it. And I find I am not singular in this Apprehension. This Consequence has been so well represented as flowing naturally to the Prejudice of the Gospel from those Principles, by a late excellent Writer, that I shall take the Liberty to transcribe some of his Words. “ I make no Question,” says He, “ but that
 “ Every Unbeliever thinks He has a Right
 “ to consider the Apostles of Christ as *weak*
 “ *Men*, and will it not then be very natural for such a One to reply to a Christian,
 “ when He appeals to the New Testament
 “ to prove the Miracles of Christ, in some
 “ such Manner as this? *viz.* We receive
 “ your History so far as it contains an Account of common Events; but so far as
 “ it contains a History of Miracles We reject
 “ it. Is it not thus that We must distinguish in reading all common Histories,
 “ unless We will suffer Ourselves to be
 “ imposed upon?” There is not a single Historian of Antiquity, whether *Greek* or *Latin*, who has not recorded “ Oracles, Prodigies, Prophecies, and Miracles, &c.” and thus He supposes Him to go on repeating the Substance of Dr. M’s Arguments, in his own Words, and insisting on the Distinction of rejecting of Course all Accounts

of Miracles, and admitting of Course all Reports of common Events.---This Author then proceeds thus, “ Whatever there be
 “ in this, it is certain that the Argument lies
 “ as strong against the Gospel as against
 “ any other History; for why may not an
 “ Unbeliever go on and say,---Thus also in
 “ the Narrative of the Acts of *Jesus Christ*,
 “ the Points of History are, that He took
 “ upon Himself to be a Prophet, and instituted a New Religion, for which he was
 “ cruelly put to Death by the *Jews*. These
 “ Facts, and whatever other ordinary Occurrences are recorded in his History, We
 “ admit. But We pause at the Miracles,
 “ which are said to have been wrought in
 “ his Favour, either when He was living,
 “ or after He was Dead; for They were
 “ weak Men that recorded them, and a
 “ weak Man can hardly make any Report,
 “ that is credible of such Events as are
 “ miraculous.” (Dr. *Stebbing's Boyle's Lectures*, P. 391, &c.) Dr. M. must, on his own Principles, be at a Loss for a proper Reply to these Objections, when thus retorted on Him by an Unbeliever; for should He say, that the Apostles were not weak Men, but Persons of known Abilities and Judgment, then the Suspicion arising from their Skill would again be retorted on Him,
 and

and it might be said that They were interested in their Pretensions, and had some favourite Opinions to recommend, by the Authority of such Works. What is justly to be said in Answer to this, may as justly be said in Defence of the Primitive Fathers, and the present Remark is this, that He could not consistently with what he has advanced on this Point, defend the History of the Gospel against this Kind of Opposition. The Argument is levelled against the Credibility of all *miraculous* Events, and is of as much Force in the one Case as in the other.

I observed in the next Place that the same Principles were as applicable to the Case of common Events, and were introductive of universal Scepticism. For by the same Evasions may One defeat the Credit of any Report, not only that is offered upon the Faith of past History, but even that is offered upon the Testimony of present Witnesses. One might observe to this Purpose, that Many False Reports have, thro' the Credulity of Some, and the Craft of Others, obtained in the World; that if the Witnesses were weak Men, They might be imposed upon, and that if they were Wise ones, They might impose upon Us, and that their Interest, or some favourite Opinion

being connected with it, did of Course destroy the Credibility of the Account. This is the Course of the Dr's Arguments against the Testimony offered for the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church, and it may be urged with just as much Force against any other ancient History, or against all History, or against all Reports whatsoever to which We were not Witnesses Ourselves, as against this. The Dr. Himself elsewhere seemed not only to allow this, but to insist upon it, in a Passage which I cited from Him on this Occasion as fully expressive of his Meaning, and plainly subversive of the Faith of all History. " The Credibility of Witnesses," says He, " depends on
 " a Variety of Principles wholly concealed
 " from Us, and tho' in many Cases it may
 " reasonably be presumed, yet in None can
 " it be certainly known: (Pref. P. 9, 10.) and then He goes on to argue from the Craft and Selfishness of Some, and the Weakness and Credulity of Others, that Nothing is to be depended on but plain Facts; which, as I observed, must be such as fall under the Evidence of our own Senses; or else all the Difficulties concerning Testimony will again return upon Us. This was totally overthrowing all the Credit of all Reports, and confining our Faith
 to

to our own Experience. This Passage referred to, certainly wanted some Vindication or Limitation, but Mr. T. thought fit to pass it over without any Attempt to clear the Sense of it, or disprove this Consequence as flowing from it.

Dr. M. proceeded from *Reason* to *Fact*, and observ'd, that " tho' there had been Contemners
 " of Miracles in all Ages, yet that History
 " had maintained its Ground thro' them all." I answered that the Difference of the Event lay not in the Difference of the Evidence, but in the Inclinations and Lusts of Mankind; and that this Observation affects not the Objection in View. The proper Question is, whether the same Arguments are not applicable in all Cases, and whether a compleat Sceptick might not reasonably contest with the Dr. on his own Principles, the most established Parts of History.

Dr. M. added, that " if this was the
 " Meaning of the Objection, that the same
 " Principles which induce Us to suspect
 " the Primitive Miracles, must induce Us
 " also, if We are consistent with Ourselves,
 " to suspect every Thing which is delivered to Us from ancient History; the
 " Matter is widely mistaken; for that the
 " History of Miracles is of a Kind totally
 " different from that of common Facts,

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" the

“ the One always to be suspected of Course,
 “ without the strongest Evidence to con-
 “ firm it; the other to be admitted of Course,
 “ without as strong Reason to suspect it.” I re-
 plied particularly to all these several Suggestions.
 I observed that the History of Miracles was not
 of a *Kind* totally different from that of
 common Facts;---that they were both the
 Objects of Sense, and that a plain honest
 Man might be a very credible Witness in
 the one Case as well as in the other;---that
 however, allowing that stronger Evidence
 was required to confirm the History of
 Miracles than of other Events, such supe-
 rior Evidence was accordingly granted in
 the Question before Us; and the Continu-
 ance of miraculous Powers in the Primitive
 Church was confirmed to Us by such Tes-
 timony as was beyond Exception. The Dis-
 interestedness, the Multiplicity, the Unani-
 mity of the Witnesses in so many Parts of the
 World, without one repugnant Testimony,
 excludes the Objection from the supposed
 Weakness of any particular Person, and
 must drive an Objector to the candid Sup-
 position of their being all *Fools* or *Knaves*,
 before He can make a Step towards eluding
 the Force of their concurring Verdict in
 this Case. “ And This,” I observed, “ might re-
 “ mind Us of the great Inequality of those Tes-
 “ timonies,

“ timonies, which Dr. *M.* has *parallel’d*,
 “ when He mentions the Tradition of sin-
 “ gle Miracles wrought long before, as re-
 “ ported by Heathen Writers, or by Popish
 “ Ones, as a Circumstance weakening the
 “ Belief of those which are spoken of as
 “ of their own certain Knowlege, and of
 “ daily Triumph, by a long Succession of
 “ Writers.” (*Free Answer*, P. 130.) Under
 this Head again Mr. *T.* has totally mistaken
 the Point which it lay upon Him to defend.
 “ The sole Question, He says, is, whe-
 “ ther an Historian may not be to be cre-
 “ dited in his Relation of common Facts,
 “ that may deserve no Credit at all in the
 “ Account He gives of Miracles.” But
 this was neither the *sole* nor the *Principal*
 Question under this Head. Tho’ it be al-
 lowed that This may in many Instances be
 the Case, yet the Objection would still hold
 as strong against Dr. *M.* that “ to reject the
 “ *unanimous* Testimony of the Fathers in
 “ their Reports of the Primitive Miracles,
 “ will destroy the Faith and Credit of all
 “ History.” The plain Reason is, that no
 “ Point of History is *better* attested, and
 “ scarce any *equally* attested, as is This of
 “ the Continuance of Miracles in the Pri-
 “ mitive Church; which cannot be said of
 “ any particular Instances given by particular
 “ Writers.

“ Writers.” The Fathers speak of these miraculous Gifts as *abounding* amongst them; They speak of them as abounding *in all Places*; They offer them to *publick Examination*; They call on their *Adversaries*, Persons prejudiced against them, and persecuting them for such Pretensions, to look into the Evidence, and offer to stake their Lives on the Consequence. Is this Evidence to be parallell’d with *Vertot’s* Mention of *the Sacred Vial*? Or does it follow, that because we may reject that Account, without destroying the Credit of the Rest of his History, that therefore We may reject the united Testimony of all the Fathers in a Case which They must know the Truth of, which They desired their Persecutors to disprove, which those Persecutors were interested to disprove; which the Apologists submitted to all Hazards to support, and which yet They had no Interest to support, if they were not true; nay which They had many Obligations and Motives to detect, if they were False; Is the Rejection of a Point so well attested, attended with all the Circumstances which are allowed in other Cases to exclude the Probability or Possibility of an Imposture, a Thing of as much Indifference to the Faith of History as the setting aside a particular Instance of a Miracle

racle in a particular Author, where We can easily account for either Supposition, of his being *deceived* Himself, or of his *intending to deceive* Us. Mr. *T.* is pleased here to say, after repeating Dr. *M.*'s Observation, that We might as well say that by rejecting the Authority of Mr. *De Vertot* in this Story, We destroy the Faith of all his other Stories, that " truly Mr. *D.* does not say one " Syllable to it, which looks very much, " as if he was conscious of the Force of " it." (P. 93.) On the contrary I had in very express Terms obviated the Force of it, by specifying particularly *the great Inequality of those Testimonies* which Dr. *M.* had parallel'd, when He mentioned the Tradition of single Miracles wrought long before, as reported by Heathen Writers, or by Popish ones, as a Circumstance weakening the Belief of Those, which are spoken of, as of their own certain Knowledge, and of daily Triumph, by a long Succession of Writers. I enlarged on this Distinction in several succeeding Pages, and shewed the Advantage arising to the Testimony of the Fathers in this Article from their *Concurrence* in this Claim in all Parts, their *Disinterestedness* in such a Claim, their *open Publication* of it to all Inquirers, and their *final Success* in such a Situation. These were Circumstances,

stances, which greatly distinguish their Account of the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church from any later Account of any particular Miracle, and We may therefore reject the latter without endangering the Faith of all History, tho' We cannot reject the former but on such Principles as may as well be brought to overthrow the Belief of every Thing which We were not Witnesses to Ourselves. If General Insinuations of the *Weakness* of One Part of Mankind, and the *Craft* of the Other, are sufficient to overthrow such Testimony, and so circumstanced, as is that of the Primitive Fathers in the Case before Us, it may be equally applied to Every Thing which We did not see Ourselves; and will be applied so, when Men have any Interest to serve in contesting any Point of History; which will render the whole precarious and uncertain; which I suppose to have been the Meaning of the Objection.

I shall now leave it to the Publick to determine, *whose Forces*, upon the Review, appear to be *weak, disjointed, and ill-armed*. If Mr. T. is disposed to *defend* the Dr. again in the same Manner, by *omitting* many, and *mistaking* most of the Points in Dispute, and from thence to raise again
such

such Self-Congratulations, I shall leave Him to triumph in Security; for I am not of his Opinion that it is worth while to write a Book, merely to shew that Another Person has wrote Nothing to the Purpose, unless One can add Something to clear and support the main Argument.



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T O
Dr. *MIDDLETON*'s
V I N D I C A T I O N
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F R E E I N Q U I R Y.

TH E foregoing *Reply* was finished just at the Time that the Newspapers informed me of the Death of Dr. *Middleton*. The Publication of it was delayed upon the Report that immediately prevailed of a Posthumous Vindication to be expected from the Dr. Himself. I was willing to see how far He approved of the *Defence*, which had been offered for Him;
to

to join the Review of Both, and to take my Leave at once of this Controversy.

Those who ventured to deliver their Sentiments in Publick in Opposition to Dr. *M*'s *Free Inquiry*, were I suppose sufficiently apprehensive of the severest Returns, which Wit and Learning could dictate; but did not perhaps expect such mean Reflections and abusive Expressions as usually arise from Writers of a lower Class. But when I reflect that He has bestowed them very freely, though not equally, on a Person, whose Abilities and Learning are above all Censure; and whose candid Treatment of Him in Particular deserved a very different Return, I begin to consider them as honourable Testimonials, as Supplements in the Room of Real Argument: Had Dr. *M*. been still Living to answer for Himself, his Style would have deserved farther Notice and Censure; but at present I will use it only as a Caution against the same Error, will endeavour as far as his own State of the Case will permit, to avoid any Personal Reflection, and to confine Myself to the Argument only.

I cannot think it Any Reflection on the Adversaries whom He has selected to answer, that They did not abide by their own Judgment in this Case, but acted by the
Advice

Advice of Friends, and professed to do so. Had Dr. M. used the same Precaution, his Performance had probably been less exceptionable. As to my own, A *Letter* wrote with the Freedom, and for the Use of a private Friend, might well be thought to need such an Apology, which was therefore with great Truth, and I think with no Impropropriety offered. Indeed I little thought that what I took to be a modest and necessary Excuse for troubling the World with my Performance, could be censured as the Effect of Pride, and called *puffing my Works a priori*. At least Dr. M. might have spared such a Censure, who boasts so loudly of the favourable Reception his Performance has met with both among the Clergy and the Laity, and the general Approbation it has every where received from those whose Authority He chiefly values, (Pref. P. 1.) Dr. Church's Vindication is so full, so compleat, and accurate, as will do Credit to the Judgment of those Friends who induced Him to oblige the World with it; had it been published sooner, it had preserved me from this Opportunity of falling under the Dr's Censure.

The next Charge is attended with greater Uneasiness. It must be difficult for the Persons concerned to see a learned Body publickly censured for their Sakes, when it is their

highest Ambition to deserve the Honours which it has conferred; and it cannot be less Uneasy to attempt a Vindication of it in this Respect. I will only observe that Dr. *M*'s Reflections are founded on a Mistake in *Fact*. This was not the first Occasion, on which either of the Persons so honoured had commenced Authors; nor was this the *sole* Reason assigned in the Form of conferring them, for which these Honours were bestowed on either.

But Dr. *M*. says, (P. 2, 3.) “ it has fallen
 “ out very unluckily, that before the Colla-
 “ tion of these Honours, one of the very
 “ Books, on the Account of which They
 “ were given, was effectually confuted; and
 “ that the Confutation of either may be
 “ very justly applied to them both.” Here He was somewhat mistaken in his Intelligence, (and since Parties in the Controversy assume a decisive Voice, why may not I take the same Liberty, and say) and in his Judgment also. The foregoing Papers are referred to in Justification of the Assertion, as far as it concerns Myself, but I can by no Means allow, that a supposed Confutation of my Answer, would equally involve Dr. *Church's Vindication*, who has added many material Observations in Relation to this Subject.

Dr.

Dr. *M*'s first Attempt in his own Vindication is to clear some Passages in his *Preface*, which have been objected to as foreign or suspicious, unintelligible or dangerous. " He " is perswaded that no Explication of them " can be wanted by any disinterested Reader, " as well as that None, which He shall give, " will ever satisfy those, who now demand " it." (P. 6.) In the first Part at least He is mistaken, for his *Defender*, whom He has hereby owned, gave up the principal Point as *obscure*, and on that Account waved the *Defence* of it; and I suppose He allowed *Him* to be a *disinterested* Reader: In the latter He has so far judged Right, as that the Explication, which He has thought fit to give, does by no Means prove satisfactory.

He observes that I " appear scandalized " by the Title of *Revelation*, which He had " given to that Discovery, which God made " of Himself in the visible Works of his " Creation. Yet, says He, it is no other, " than what the Wise in All Ages have given to it, &c." I never think it worth while to dispute about *Words*, where the *Meaning* is clearly expressed; but should Any Man tell me, that He believed in *Revelation*, and upon Enquiry should afterwards explain Himself, that He thought that the wonderful Fabric and Constitution of worldly

Things demonstrated the Being and Attributes of God, I should think not only that He talked *improperly*, but that He actually intended to *deceive* me; as He certainly would have done without this farther Explication. I will not deny, but that All Knowledge, which is communicated to Us, may in some Sense be said to be *revealed*, as conveying Notions to the Mind which were not *imprinted* there before; and in this Sense the Word may have been used, without Danger of Error, by Those who have discoursed on the natural Ways and Means of attaining Knowledge. But when the Manifestation of the *Will of God*, as a *Law* to his Rational Creatures, is the Subject of Discourse, here the Term of *Revelation* bears an appropriated Sense, and is ever used to signify that Knowledge, which has been communicated by *supernatural* Interposition, to supply the Defects, or correct the Errors of their natural Light. In this View it is used in Contradistinction to those Deductions of *Reason*, which are drawn from the *Constitution of Nature*, and was therefore very improperly introduced in a Discourse on *Miracles*, to signify that Light, which God gave of Himself from the Beginning, and placed continually before our Eyes in the
wonderful

wonderful Works and beautiful Fabric of this visible World.

Dr. M. adds that “ the Wise in all Ages
 “ have not only given the Title of *Revelation*
 “ to the Discovery which God made of
 “ Himself in the visible Works of his Cre-
 “ ation, but have also considered it as the
 “ most authentic and indisputable Revela-
 “ tion, which God has ever given of Him-
 “ self from the Beginning of the World
 “ to this Day. It was this, says He, by
 “ which the First Notice of Him was re-
 “ vealed to the Inhabitants of the Earth;
 “ and by which alone it has been kept up
 “ ever since, among all the several Nations
 “ of it. From this the Reason of Man
 “ was enabled, to trace out his Nature and
 “ Attributes, and by a gradual Deduction
 “ of Consequences to learn his own Nature
 “ also, with all the Duties belonging to it,
 “ which relate either to God or his Fel-
 “ low-Creatures.” (P. 7.) Now I cannot
 assent to all this, because the *Scripture*, which
 is the Rule of my Faith, teaches me a very
 different Scheme. It has made it questiona-
 ble, whether the Constitution of Nature
 yielded the *First* Notice of the Existence
 of a God; and it has made it unquestiona-
 ble, that it was not the *only* Means, by
 which it has ever since been kept up a-

mong all the several Nations of the World. *Adam* had probably immediate Information concerning the Author and End of his Being, before He had traced it out by *argumentative* Consequences, from Reflections on Himself, and the Things around Him; and it is certain that He afterwards enjoyed frequent and extraordinary Methods of Intercourse with the Deity. His Children therefore did not receive their first Notice of the Deity by Argumentations from the Constitution of Nature, but by Instruction from their Parent; and as *Revelations*, that is, *supernatural* Manifestations of the Will of God, were renewed and repeated in the Patriarchal Age, *their* Children likewise in their Education enjoyed the Benefit of such Knowledge, and thus All Nations descended from them have had the Advantage of *Traditional Revelation* to aid and assist their natural Reason. The Intercourse and Communication of Many People with the Children of *Israel*, amongst whom these Revelations were continued, was a farther Help, and may shew that it was not owing to a View of the Fabric of the World *alone*, that Men retained any Sense of God, or of their Duty to Him.

It is added, “ This Constitution of Things
 “ was ordained by God as an universal Law
 “ or

“ or Rule of Conduct to Man ; the Source
 “ of all his Knowledge ; the Test of all Truth ;
 “ by which all subsequent Revelations,
 “ which are supposed to have been given
 “ by God in any other Manner, must be
 “ tried, and cannot be received as Divine,
 “ any farther than as they are found to
 “ tally and coincide with this Original
 “ Standard.” This, instead of clearing the
 suspicious Passages already censured, is Open-
 ing the Way to a new Controversy ; new
 I mean in Relation to the present Question,
 tho’ not many Years since it was the Sub-
 ject of a very considerable Debate ; and
 was urged as the principal Objection against
 the *Necessity* or *Expediency* of any *Revela-*
tion. The Substance of what is here ad-
 vanced is refuted by an Argument, which
 is usually a favourite one with Dr. M. that
 of plain *Experience*. Men could not from a
 View of the Fabrick of the World trace
 out such a System, as should be the Source
 of all Knowledge, and the Test of all Truth ;
 and in Fact They did not. There is surely a
 great Impropriety in saying, that “ This
 “ Constitution of Things was ordained by God
 “ as an universal Law or Rule of Conduct
 “ to Man.” This wonderful Fabric and
 Constitution of Worldly Things was No-
 thing more than the *Object of his Senses*,

from whence He was by his *Reason* to trace out the Will of God, which only could be called a *Law* or *Rule of Conduct* to Himself: And here his *Reason*, whatever was the Occasion, prov'd insufficient to the Purpose, and was *not* " enabled to trace out " the Divine Nature and Attributes, and by " a gradual Deduction of Consequences to " learn his own Nature also, with all the " Duties belonging to it, which relate either " to God, or his Fellow-Creatures." Whatever might have been hoped or conjectured in *Speculation* on this Subject, yet the first View of Mankind in their several Situations, the least Acquaintance with their Opinions and Practices in present and past Times, must convince Us, that this Supposition is entirely groundless; and that Those, who had no Light but what was drawn from their own Reasonings on the Constitution of Things, fell into Notions and Practices, which not only were not the Test of all Truth, but which were indeed the Disgrace and Reproach of Human Nature. And this was the Case not locally and accidentally, but in many very material Points uniformly and universally.

The plain Questions arising from what is here suggested are these, whether the Religion of Nature deducible from a View
of

of the Constitution of it, be absolutely perfect; whether it be discoverable by every Man, for if it be not it cannot to Him be the Test of all Truth; and whether it be more easily and perfectly discoverable than the Proof and Meaning of any Revelation can be. If Any want Satisfaction in these important Points, They cannot fail, I think, of receiving it in that clear State of the Case, and unanswerable Decision of the Questions, which the present learned Bishop of Bristol *bonybore* has offered in his excellent *Defence of Revelation*. Such *Perspicuity* in Conjunction with such forcible *Reasoning* is a peculiar Felicity, and having so happily been employed on this Subject, has rendered unnecessary the Attempt of inferior Pens on this Argument, and ought to have obviated the Repetition of these Insinuations.

Dr. M. says He referred to this Law deducible from the wonderful Works of the Creation to assist his Readers in “ discovering the genuine Way which God Himself has marked out to Us for the Acquisition of true Knowledge, not from the Authority, or the Reports of our Fellow-Creatures, but from the Information of the Facts, and material Objects, which, in his providential Distribution of Worldly Things, He hath presented to the perpetual

“tual Observation of our Senses.” Now is there not here again a strange Confusion of Argument, or Mistake of Fact? Can it be said with Truth, that the genuine Way, which God has marked out to Us for the Acquisition of true Knowledge, is not from the Authority or Reports of our Fellow-Creatures? Is it not remarkably otherwise? Is it not the Wise Disposition of Providence, that We are so brought into the World, that We receive our first Notices of Duty merely by Authority and Report, by the Instruction of Parents, before We are able to make Inferences and Observations on the Formation of the natural World, and on the Wisdom and Goodness of the Creator therein manifested? Do We not by this providential Method of Education know much of the proper *Return of Duty* to our Maker, before We should in the other Way have traced out of Ourselves his Existence from his Works? And can it then be said, that the Authority and Reports of our Fellow-Creatures are not the genuine Way marked out by God for the Acquisition of true Knowledge? Nay, had this Case been otherwise, had We learned our first Knowledge from the Information of Facts and material Objects, how would it follow from hence, that because God has given Us one Means of

Knowledge,

Knowledge, therefore He intended to *exclude another*, and meant that We should not depend on the Authority and Report of our Fellow-Creatures? Above All, how was this Principle consistent in One, who believed that *Jesus* and his Apostles worked Miracles in Attestation of the Gospel, the Evidence of which to future Ages must depend on Authority and Report? Might not an Unbeliever retort the Observation against the Miracles of the Gospel, and insist that this was not the genuine Way marked out by God, for the Acquisition of true Knowledge, which was to be had from a View of the Fabric of the World? Was there ever such an Apology offered to vindicate a Man from the Imputation of *Deism*, by saying no more than a Deist might and would have said, and in the Manner too in which They usually do say it?

Dr. *M.* adds, that He had another View likewise in the same Passages, and applicable to the End, of giving the “ Reader a
 “ more enlarged Notion of the Question in
 “ Dispute, who, by turning his Thoughts
 “ to reflect on the Works of the Creator,
 “ as they are manifested to Us in this Fa-
 “ bric of the World, could not fail to ob-
 “ serve, that they were All of them great,
 “ noble and suitable to the Majesty of his
 “ Nature;

“ Nature ; carrying with them the Proofs
 “ of their Origin, and shewing themselves
 “ to be the Productions of an All-wise and
 “ All-mighty Being ; and by accustoming
 “ his Mind to these sublime Reflections,
 “ He will be prepared to determine, whe-
 “ ther those miraculous Interpositions, so
 “ confidently affirmed to Us by the Primi-
 “ tive Fathers, can reasonably be thought
 “ to make a Part in the grand Scheme of
 “ the Divine Administration ; or, whether
 “ it be agreeable, that God, who created
 “ all Things by his Will, and can give what
 “ Turn to them He pleases by the same
 “ Will ; should for the particular Purposes
 “ of his Government, and the Service of
 “ the Church, descend to the low Expe-
 “ dient of Visions and Revelations ; grant-
 “ ed sometimes to Boys, for the Instructi-
 “ on of the Elders, and sometimes to Wo-
 “ men, to settle the Fashion and Length
 “ of their Veils, and sometimes also to the
 “ Pastors of the Church, to injoin them to
 “ ordain one Man a Lecturer, another a
 “ Priest, &c.” (P. 8.) Now there is only
 one single Circumstance again in all this,
 which may not be retorted upon a Profes-
 sor of Christianity by an Adversary. Every
 One, who believes the Bible, knows that
 the great God, who made the World, has
 not

not thought it beneath his Majesty, for the particular Purposes of his Government, and the Service of his Church, to descend to the Expedient of Visions and Revelations, and even in the Manner and for the Purposes of all the several Instances here selected for Ridicule; except the One Article of *lengthning the Veils*. The Others were parallel'd by Instances in the Old or New Testament, and were therefore very unseasonably produced by a *Believer*, and in an express *Vindication* too of his Belief. I need not insist on the Misrepresentation of granting Visions and Revelations to Boys for the Information of Elders; If it was real, was it any other than happened to *Samuel* for the Reproof of old *Eli*? If Visions and Revelations are said to have been made to *Women* in the Primitive Church, Do We not likewise read in the New Testament of *Virgins that did prophecy*, tho' it is not said in what Manner or for what particular End? And as to the Choice of Officers in the Church, Nothing could well be of more Importance, and it is in the Sacred Writings more than once said to have been the Matter of a particular Divine Designation. If the *Occasion*, on which a miraculous Interposition is reported, appear unworthy of it, and especially after a strict Examination
of

of it in all its Circumstances, This will be a very material Objection: But is it not most unaccountable, that such Examples should be brought as *incredible*, as occur likewise in the *Bible*, by One who admits the Authority of it? If his own Arguments were of any Weight they would overthrow the Credit of the Sacred History; whereas it was the very Point now in View, the very Business, which in this Part engaged Dr. M. to remove this Objection from his former Performance, and to reconcile his Reference to the Fabric of the World as the surest Instruction in all Cases, with his Belief of any miraculous Interpositions. Instead of this He has strengthened the Objection by making such an Exception to the Miracles of the Primitive Church, as would be of as much Weight against the Miracles of the Gospel, when it was his very Business to have pointed out some Distinction between them to the Prejudice of the former. He has thrown in a farther Insinuation from the *Visions of interested Priests*, but I have already shewn how little the *Priests* were *interested* in such a Fraud before the Civil Establishment of Christianity; He adds that these Pretences were derided at the very Time by Men of Sense to whom they were proposed. This is true of Some of them, and it is as true

true that the Doctrines of Christianity were derided by them too; but they are not, I hope, the less true on that Account.

There follows a Citation from *Cicero* declaring the “ true Law to be right Reason, “ conformable to the Nature of Things, “ constant, eternal, diffused through All, “ immutable, &c.” This Dr. M. says, will illustrate his Sense also in the exceptionable Passages abovementioned, and observes, that it is preserved to Us with a Note of Approbation, by *Lactantius*, the best Christian Writer of the third Century. (P. 10.) The Observations which I shall offer upon it are as follow.

In the First Place, if this Law of right Reason was as perfect and immutable, as is represented, yet in the only Sense in which it is so, it is not deducible from a View of the Fabric of the World, and therefore this is not an *Illustration* but an *Alteration* of the fore-mentioned Assertions. If Mankind is not possessed of this unerring right Reason, what signifies to them how perfect is that Law arising from it, which is beyond their Discovery; and which yet cannot be a Law to them any farther than it is discoverable by them? The great and mighty Works of Nature, which are referred to, may be allowed to proclaim very convincingly an intelligent

gent and omnipotent Author; but they afford Us very little Light as to the *Rules of our Behaviour* with Respect to our Maker, Our Neighbour, or Ourselves. Here We enter into *Inferences* and *Deductions*, where the Light of Nature presently fails Us, at least where it did fail the *Heathen World*, for in them We can best judge of the Force and Extent of mere Human Reason. Enlightned by Revelation *We* can argue in another Manner than *They* did, and are sometimes apt to mistake this communicated Knowledge for the Effect of our own Discoveries. But will Any One say; that this perfect immutable Law of Nature was actually known to the Heathen World? If so, whence their Contradictions to each Other, and their Inconsistencies in themselves? Was there ever such a Scheme of natural Religion delineated amongst them, as We have seen among Us? And if there had, yet unless it had been universally received, the Presumption formed against miraculous Interpositions from this Consideration, could be of no Weight. But in Fact no such perfect Law of right Reason was established amongst them. The Immoralities, the Follies, the Superstitions, not merely of the Vulgar, but even of several of their Instructors, were contemptible in one Light, and afflicting in another;

another ; and the Schemes of their best Philosophers were uncertain in some Points, defective in others, and erroneous in very many. Dr. *M.* indeed says, that “ this universal Law was actually revealed to the Heathen World, long before the Gospel was known to it.” If He means that the Fabric of the World was visible to Them as well as to Us, it is most certainly true ; but if He means, as He must do, to render his Observation of any Force to his Argument, that They were able to collect from thence a compleat Rule of Life, this is as certainly false. The Ignorance and Absurdities prevailing almost universally in the Heathen World, are an unanswerable Confutation of such an Assertion.

Cicero is cited as explaining and confirming this Sentiment. He says, “ The true Law is right Reason, conformable to the Nature of Things ; constant, eternal, diffused through all ;---not to be over-ruled by any other, nor abrogated in the whole or Part, &c.” The Substance of this Passage is this, that whatever is conformable to *right Reason*, is in all Cases to be considered as the *Will of God*, and is therefore always equally binding. No Authority can really dispense with it, and No Man, who has any Degree of Conscience left, can excuse

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cuse Himself for the Transgression of it. This is a true and a noble Sentiment; but does *Tully* assert that this Law of right Reason was in all the particular Instances of it known to all Men? If He did assert it, it was false in Fact, and contradicted by the many Confessions of the Ignorance and Uncertainty of Mankind, which appear throughout his Writings: If He did not assert it, I see not how such a general Assertion, that whatever is *reasonable* is always *obligatory*, can illustrate or establish Dr. *M*'s Argument, that “ The Testimony of Facts, as
 “ it is offered to our Senses, in this wonderful Fabric and Constitution of Things
 “ may properly be called the Testimony of
 “ God Himself, as it carries with it the surest
 “ Instruction in all Cases and to all Nations, which in the ordinary Course of his
 “ Providence He has thought fit to appoint
 “ for the Conduct of Human Life.” I have remarked before on the *saving Clause* here inserted, but I do not find that *Tully* explains or teaches this Doctrine, that “ the Fabric
 “ of the World carries the surest Instruction in all Cases and to all Nations.” He says that the Law of right Reason is inviolable and eternal, binding at all Times and on all Persons; but He does not say that it is discoverable by all Persons from
 the

the Formation of the World ; and if it be not, it can be a *Law* to them no farther than it appears to them. *Other Methods* may convey surer Instruction to them *what* is *reasonable* in many Cases, than this wonderful Fabric and Constitution of Things, and by so doing may make this Law of right Reason more clear, and consequently more extensively binding on them.

Dr. *M.* adds, that whatever his Opposers may esteem or call this Passage of *Cicero*, cited by Him, yet He “ shall ever avow it
 “ as the fundamental, essential, and vital
 “ Part of all true Religion, and what the
 “ Gospel must adopt, as its best Founda-
 “ tion and Support.” That there may be no farther Dispute about Words, it will be proper to be distinct and explicit upon this Head. If by this be meant, that the Gospel must be built on this Principle, that “ whatever is conformable to right Reason must always be binding as far as it
 “ is known, and that Nothing can be en-
 “ joined, which is contrary to it,” this may readily be admitted ; but then Men wanted the Assistance of *Revelation* to discover, what in many Cases They could not find out of Themselves, namely, what was agreeable to right Reason. But if by this be meant, that the Gospel pre-supposes a

preceding compleat Discovery of all reasonable Rules of Life by the Light of Nature, in which it can make no Alterations or Additions, then this is absolutely false in Fact, and professedly contrary to the avowed Intent of this Revelation. This undertook to *turn Us from Darknefs to Light*, to instruct Us in many Points which were unknown or misunderstood before; and This it has happily effected in some Articles of Morality as well as of Religion.

There is indeed a Sense, in which the Law of Nature and Religion may be said to be perfect and immutable. It is allowed, that there arises a *Fitness of Action* from the Relations of Things and Beings, and This being considered as the *Will* of that *Almighty Being*, who made and placed them in that Situation, does in that View become a *Law*, or binding Rule of Conduct to all reasonable Creatures. This Law, or Fitness of Action, whilst Circumstances continue in all Respects the same, must be as immutable as the Will of God; which in the same Situation must always intend the same Conduct. As this Fitness of Action arises from the *Constitution of Nature*, it may be called the *Law of Nature*; but still it can be no farther a *Law* to Us, than as it appears to Us, and if our *Reason* cannot discover, what

what are the several Relations which We stand in to all other Beings, nor what is that Propriety of Action, which results from those Relations, We are not the Wiser for the Eternity and Immutability of that Law, which *Tully* speaks of, but ought thereby to be made the more sensible of the Necessity of some farther Light to point out to Us what is *fit* and *proper*, or in other Words, what is the *Will of God* in our present Situation.

But it must be observed farther, that even this Immutability of the Law of Nature is but *Hypothetical*, and depends on the supposed Continuance of Mankind in the same natural and moral Situation. Should They, by the Permission or Direction of their Maker, fall into any Alteration of Circumstances, and stand in any different Relation to the Author of their Being, or to other Beings, or to each Other, the Rule of Conduct, which arises from Relations and Situations, must vary likewise; and That must become fit and proper now, in a new Condition; which was not so before. It is always fit and proper, that Reasonable Creatures should act suitably to their Nature and Station; and in this Sense *Morality* is eternal and immutable; but in *what Instances* it must be expressed, must depend on its Suitableness to such their Nature and

Station, and cannot therefore be more unchangeable than they are.

With this Caution and Limitation We may admit the Truth of what *Cicero* has here advanced, but I see not the least Advantage which it will yield to Dr. *M*'s Cause, or his Defence. A Man might acknowledge that whatever was *reasonable* was *binding*, and was to be considered as the *Will of Him* who made and so disposed the Constitution of Nature, without pretending to point out what was reasonable in all Cases; which was the great Point in which Mankind needed Instruction, and therefore needed an express Revelation. *Lactantius* considered the forementioned Acknowledgment as an extraordinary Discovery in a Heathen, but He as expressly takes Notice of his Defect in the latter, and points to the very Distinction here inculcated. "As," says He, "*Cicero* clearly saw the Force and the Ground of the Holy Law, so, if He had known or could have explained its Precepts also, He would then have performed the Part, not of a Philosopher, but of a Prophet." This is the true State of the Case. Obedience to the *Will of God* is the true Foundation of all Duty and Obligation, and therefore *Tully* in so representing it, and in considering *Reason* as only the *Means* of arriving at the Knowledge of the Divine Will,

Will, spoke like a Wife, 'as well as Good Man. But his own great Share of Reason was not equal to the Task of determining what in all Cases was *fit* and *proper*, and therefore the *Will of God*; and if it had, yet Others were little able to comprehend his Reasonings, and little disposed to submit to his Authority; and therefore *Revelation* was in both Respects *expedient*, if not absolutely *necessary*.

Let Us briefly review the Occasion, on which these Reasonings and Citations were introduced. Dr. M. in referring to the Fabric of the World as the surest Instruction in all Cases;---in confining our View of what the Creator has actually done, to the Contemplation of the Revelation, which He has made of Himself in the wonderful Works and beautiful Fabric of this visible World;---and in censuring the Judgment of Those as fallacious, who desert this Path of Nature and Experience; was thought to throw out strong Hints against the Belief of all miraculous Interpositions; and was desired to reconcile these Passages with his Acknowledgment of the Miracles of the Gospel. These Insinuations seemed to reach farther than He might intend, and to affect all other Claims to supernatural Power as well as those, which were advanced in the Primitive Church.

Dr. *M.* it seems thought this Objection worth his Notice, and it was natural to expect in his Defence some strong and explicit Declarations of his *Christian Faith*, and some Distinctions, by which a View of the Fabric of the World might be shewn to favour the *Miracles of the Gospel* more than those of the *Primitive Church*. Instead of which We are favoured with a new Subject, concerning the Perfection of the Law of Nature and Reason, which is false in one Sense and foreign in the other; and which, instead of removing the former Insinuations, is advanced directly in the same Manner, in which it was not long since urged by a professed Enemy of all Revelation. This was not always Dr. *M.*'s Strain; in his Life of *Cicero* (2d Edit. 8vo. Vol. 3. p. 354.) He speaks of the Law of Nature---as written in the Hearts of the Gentiles, to Guide Them thro' that State of Ignorance and Darknes, of which They themselves complained; 'till *They should be Bless'd with a more perfect Revelation of the Divine Will*: And again, p. 357. that the most exalted State of Human Reason is so far from superseding the Use, that it demonstrates the Benefit of a more explicit Revelation;---and that we must needs see abundant Reason to be Thankful to God for the *Divine Light of his Gospel*. How to reconcile all This with the Sentiments and Expressions

pressions of his Vindication, it is now too late to ask Dr. *M.* I shall therefore leave the Case, without farther Remark to the Judgment of his Advocates as well as of his Opposers.

Dr. *M.* comes now to the Defence of the *Free Inquiry*, in which the First Head relates to the *Silence* of the Apostolical Fathers on the Subject of these Miraculous Powers. And here Archbishop *Wake's* Opinion was mentioned as frivolous and ill-grounded, yet without any Attempt of disproving the principal Evidence offered for it. Mr. *Toll* attempted to supply this Defect, and to Him Dr. *M.* now refers for Satisfaction herein, so that in this Point I need only refer to my Reply to Him.

Dr. *M.* says, that “ the Reasons why He
 “ omitted to take Notice of this Passage,
 “ were first the utter Insignificancy, which it
 “ appeared to have, as to any Proof or Evidence,
 “ relating to this Question; and,
 “ secondly, a Regard also for the Character
 “ of that worthy Prelate, which made Him
 “ unwilling to recall into public Light a Paraphrase,
 “ which He took to be unworthy
 “ of Him, &c.” (P. 13.) Perhaps the Review, which has been offered of that Passage, may shew that neither of these Reasons need have prevailed with Dr. *M.* for the former Omission of it, nor for neglecting to reinforce

force his Defender on this Point. Possibly the same favourable Intention towards the Archbishop's Character led Him likewise to qualify and alter his Words in the Account which He has given of his Opinion in this Matter. He represents the Archbishop as speaking with *Diffidence* and *Uncertainty* with Regard to the miraculous Gifts of the Apostolick Fathers. He does indeed speak with some Caution of their having the Gift of *Inspiration*, and says, that *in all Probability they were endued with the extraordinary Assistance of the Holy Spirit in what They teach Us*, (C. x. §. 11.) This Dr. M. changed into *the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, thus making the Archbishop speak in general of *all* extraordinary Gifts, whereas He spoke only of one, *viz.* immediate Inspiration. The Archbishop Himself expressly made this Distinction, and went on in the very next Section to shew, that therefore They *probably* had the Gift of Inspiration, because They *certainly* had other extraordinary Endowments; and again in the Beginning of the 18th Section says in these Words, "This will afford Us
 " just Cause to conclude that these Holy
 " Men were *doubtless* endued with a very
 " large Portion of the extraordinary Gifts of
 " the Holy Ghost," from whence He infers,
 that

that They had their Share also of the particular Gift which He was speaking of.

Dr. M. did Him the Favour of some farther Misrepresentations. Besides the groundless Charge of his neglecting to bring Testimonies from the Writers themselves (which perhaps may be evaded by saying that those Testimonies were not *express*, but to be made out by *Inferences*; which however were distinct from such as were drawn merely from external Circumstances: Besides this) when He is farther citing Him as arguing, that “ the Apostolical Fathers were themselves “ also in some Measure inspired too,” He adds without any Authority from, and in express Contradiction to his Author, *or endowed with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost*: And again, when the Archbishop allows, that the Gifts and Commission of the Fathers were inferior to those of the Apostles, Dr. M. represents Him as saying that they were *far inferior*, and that *both in their Kind and Degree*; which Words, tho’ put in *Italicks*, as if they were the Archbishop’s own, are no other than an Improvement of the Dr’s. These Alterations might be intended in Regard for the Character of that worthy Prelate; but I presume, that All Persons would choose rather to have Justice done them by a fair Citation of their Works, than the

the Favour of such Alterations as Others may happen to think more to their Credit.

My Father, whom Dr. M. calls a Writer of a more *sanguine Complexion* than Archbishop Wake, (tho' the One had declared as peremptorily for the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Church as the Other, and Both had referred to the Evidence next contested) had appealed to the Title or Address of *Ignatius's* Epistle to the Church of *Smyrna* as a plain Proof, that Miracles then continued. Dr. M. here again contents Himself with what He has already said on this Point, and with referring again to Mr. *Toll's Defence*; which, such as it is, I have already considered. He goes on however to establish his own Sense of the Word *Charisma*, which, He says, "as well in its Native and proper
 " Sense, as in the Use, which has ever been
 " made of it both by the sacred, and pri-
 " mitive Writers, signifies nothing more
 " than a Gift, whether it be natural or super-
 " natural, ordinary or extraordinary." The direct Answer to this Observation is, that the former Part of it is true, but Nothing to the Purpose, and the latter Part of it is Nothing more than a Mistake. The native and proper Sense of the Word means a *Gift* in general, but this cannot prove, that it may not, or was not *restrained* and *appropriated* by Custom

Custom, to mean a particular Kind of Gift. The native and proper Sense of the Word *Apostle* means, We know, no more than a *Messenger*, but will it therefore be said, that it really means no more, and did not by Use contract a peculiar Sense? It is asserted however in Fact, that “ *Charisma* in the
 “ Use, which has ever been made of it
 “ both by the Sacred and the Primitive Wri-
 “ ters signifies nothing more than a Gift,
 “ whether it be natural or supernatural,
 “ ordinary or extraordinary.” This is a Point, which can only be determined by an Examination of all the Passages wherein it occurs. And First, as to the Sacred Writers, upon a Review of all the Texts, in which the Word is used, I think I may re-assert that it bears an appropriated Sense, and is not used to signify a Gift in general, or a natural and ordinary Gift. There is only One or Two Passages, which can occasion any Doubt, and they are not those cited by Dr. M. on the Occasion. Would He say that Eternal Life, or the Remission of many Offences unto Justification, are natural and ordinary Gifts? The Term *Charisma* is almost universally used to signify the Gift peculiarly given to Christians thro’ their Saviour, which, in whatever Sense it is interpreted, is no Gift of *Nature*. If One Exception be
 thought

thought to be found, the Answer will be, that even that will be as rational, if understood as the Gift of *God our Saviour*, in Conformity to the Expression as elsewhere used; or that if it be not, one single Instance will not in this Case invalidate an appropriated Meaning, any more than in the other referred to: For the Word *Apostle* is found once or twice used in a Sense different from that, to which it is confessed to be peculiarly applied. The whole Scheme of our Salvation is sometimes represented as the *extraordinary Gift of God* under this Term in the *singular* Number; and the extraordinary Gifts which contributed as *Means* to promote this End, are always expressed by the same Term in the *plural* Number. Other Gifts not strictly miraculous may possibly be included with those, which are so, under the same Expression. But the Point and Stress of this Observation is, that This Term is not used to signify natural Gifts, or moral Virtues, or ordinary Grace *exclusive* of supernatural Endowments. Whereas it is uniformly and constantly used to signify *supernatural* Endowments in Contradistinction to natural Gifts throughout the first Epistle of St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, where He treats professedly on this Subject. Here it cannot be said that *doremata*, or any other general Term,

Term, is used indifferently with this, to signify those extraordinary Gifts; but when the Apostle confined Himself to those Gifts, He confined Himself likewise to this particular Term. This was *appropriating* it as strongly to this precise Meaning, as the Practice and Authority of an Apostle could do it; and this *Appropriation* was little less than necessary to guard against Errors, which might happen in the Use of a Word of a more doubtful Signification. If We find this Appropriation of this Term retained by succeeding Writers, We have then all the Evidence, which can well be expected upon such an Article.

Dr. M. says, that the Primitive Writers ever made use of it to signify nothing more than a Gift, whether it be natural or supernatural, ordinary or extraordinary. Certainly it was a Task that properly lay on Him to prove this by the Induction of several Particulars, by referring to such Passages in the Primitive Writers, where the Word was used unquestionably in this Sense. But He contents Himself with referring to two Passages in St. *Clemens*, wherein, He says, He had before shewn that “ He had applied the Word *Charismata*, or Gifts of “ God, to denote the different Talents and “ Abilities, natural and acquired, by which “ the

“ the Characters of Men are usually distinguished.” Now in the first of these Passages referred to, the Word *Charisma* is not mentioned at all, and in the second it is not mentioned in the *Plural* Number, so that neither of these Passages can possibly prove what He now asserts, that *Charismata* was used by St. *Clemens* to denote different Talents and Abilities natural and acquired. He goes on with so gross a Misrepresentation of my Assertion on this Occasion, as will exercise one’s Charity to account for candidly. He says that I “ declare that the “ very Gifts, or *Charismata* here recited, such “ as Strength, Riches, Wisdom, Humility, “ Continence, may strictly be interpreted “ of supernatural Endowments.” Whereas I said expressly that the Sense of those Passages is full as rational and as strong, if in both Places We interpret *them*, (that is, the Expression of a *large Effusion of the Holy Spirit*, and of *the Gift of God*, that called *χάρισμα*, which I had recited in the preceding Sentence, and which Dr. *M.* had attempted to invalidate) strictly of supernatural Endowments. I considered these as *distinct* from the natural Gifts, and acquired Virtues afterwards mentioned, as I have shewn more at large in the Review of the last Passage, where *Charisma* is the Term used, and which

which alone therefore at present concerns the Question. Of these I spoke so evidently that I know not how the Sentence could be mistaken, or how so absurd an Assertion could possibly be formed out of it, as Dr. *M.* has been pleased to represent as mine. I had rather stand convicted of many *Mistakes* than of such a palpable *Misrepresentation*.

If We go on to examine the Writers next succeeding the Apostles, this Term, wherever it occurs, bears plainly the Sense of an extraordinary Gift. Dr. *M.* Himself has so translated it in some Places, and his Neglect of pointing to other Passages, where it must be confined to common and ordinary Endowments, is a strong presumptive Proof, that no such Passages were to be found. Indeed had They used the Term in a Sense different from that which St. *Paul* used it in just before, without explaining that They intended it in another Sense, This must have occasioned great Confusion amongst Those, who were accustomed to the Reading of that Apostle's Writings: Whereas when the Context shews, that They used the Word in the same Meaning, This is a strong Proof, that *They* were convinced that the Apostle had so appropriated it. Nothing less than some plain and positive In-

stances, wherein the Term could mean Nothing but natural or acquired Gifts, would be sufficient to weaken the Force of this Observation.

Some other Writers however have endeavoured to supply the Dr's Omission in this Particular. The Author of the *two previous Questions* especially observes, that "it
" must not be inferred from such an Ex-
" pression, that *every One*, who is said to
" receive *χάρισμα*, a Gift, received one of
" the *miraculous* Sort." (P. 114.) He seems indeed to differ somewhat from Dr. M. for He allows that *χάρισμα* signifies an *extraordinary Endowment*, (P. 116.) which, I think, He explains to mean, in the lowest Sense, such Acts of Faith and good Life as in *Kind* or *Degree* are peculiar to the Professors of the Gospel. The Authority here referred to, to shew the ambiguous and indiscriminate Use of this Word, is that of the *Apostolical Constitutions*, which Those, who have cited on this Occasion, have sufficiently shewn that They esteem as a manifest Forgery. However, it is said to be of good Authority in this Case, and I mean not to dispute it; it being the Work of some early Writer or Writers, who may very well inform Us, in what Sense this Term was used and understood in their Time. And this Testimony

timony is as full and decisive against Dr. M's Assertion, that "the Word *Charisma*, in the " Use made of it both by the Sacred and " Primitive Writers, signifies nothing more " than a Gift, whether it be natural or supernatural, ordinary or extraordinary," as any that One would wish to produce. The Chapter referred to, treats professedly of those *Charismata* then spoken of by Christian Writers, and abounding amongst them. And first it appropriates the Meaning of them to such Gifts as were bestowed on the Members of the Church, by *Christ* the Head of it, and illustrates this Meaning by that Promise of such Powers as were unquestionably miraculous in every Instance. " Our " God and Saviour Jesus Christ spake thus to " Us, when we were All together, concerning those *Charismata*, which were given " by Him thro' the Spirit: *These Signs shall follow them that believe, in my Name shall They cast out Devils, &c.*" *---" which *Charismata* were given first to Us the Apostles, " who were to preach the Gospel to every " Creature; and then of Necessity were " imparted to those, who were brought over

* Οὗτοι πάντες ἅμα, περὶ τῶν ἐξ αὐτοῦ διὰ τὸ πνεῦμα-
τος δεδομένων χαρισμάτων. Σημεῖα δὲ τοῖς πισεύουσιν,
ταῦτα παρακαλεῖται ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου δαιμόνια ἐκβα-
λεῖν, &c.

“ to the Faith by Us ; not for any Advantage
 “ thereby to Those, who wrought them,
 “ but for the Conviction of Unbelievers, that
 “ Those, whom the Preaching of the Word
 “ could not influence, might be brought to
 “ Shame by the Power of those Signs †.”
 ---“ It is not necessary therefore that every
 “ Believer should cast out Devils, or raise the
 “ Dead, or speak with Tongues, but such
 “ an One as shall be thought worthy of a
 “ *Charisma* for any useful Cause, for the
 “ Salvation of a Believer ‡.”---“ We say these
 “ Things, that those, who have received
 “ these *Charismata*, should not be lifted up
 “ against those who have not received them;
 “ for We speak of such *Charismata* as relate
 “ to miraculous Powers ; for there is no One
 “ who has believed in God thro’ Christ, but
 “ what has receiv’d a spiritual *Charisma* ||.”

† Τῶν τῶν χαρισμάτων πρότερον μὲν ἡμῖν δοθέντων τοῖς ἀποστόλοις μέλλεσι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καταγγέλλειν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει· ἔπειτα δὲ τοῖς δι’ ἡμῶν πισεύουσιν ἀναγκαίως χρηγημένων· ἐκ εἰς τὴν τῷ ἐνεργούντων ὠφέλειαν, ἀλλ’ εἰς τὴν ἀπίστων συγκατάθεσιν, ἵνα ὅς ἐκ ἔπεισεν ὁ λόγος, τέτρες ἢ τῶν σημείων δυσωπήσῃ δύναμις·

‡ ἐκ ἐπάναγκης ἔν παντα πισὸν δαίμονας ἐκβάλλειν, ἢ νεκροὺς ἀναστῆναι, ἢ γλώσσαις λαλεῖν; ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀξιοῦντα χαρίσματος ἐπὶ τινὶ αἰτίᾳ χρησίμῃ εἰς σωτηρίαν τῶν ἀπίστων·

|| Ταῦτα δὲ σαμεν, ἐπὶ τὸ μὴ ἐπαίρεσθαι τὸς λαβόντας χαρίσματα τειάδε, κατὰ τῶν μὴ λαβόντων, χαρίσματα δὲ λέγομεν, τὰ διὰ τῶν σημείων, ἐπεὶ ἐκ ἑστίν ἀνθρωπῶ· πισεύσας διὰ χριστοῦ εἰς τὸν θεόν, ὃς ἐκ ἑίληψε χάρισμα πνευματικόν·

This

This Distinction is appeal'd to, to shew that the Word was not appropriated to mean a *super-natural* Endowment; whereas it appears to me to prove that it was so appropriated, and would be so understood, if some particular and express Caution was not thrown in to shew where it might signify otherwise. Those, who have asserted that *Charismata* was used to signify miraculous Powers, never said that it could not signify any thing less, according to the original and native Sense of the Word; but that it was so fixed by the customary Use of it amongst the earliest Writers in the Christian Church as obviously to bear that Meaning. This very Chapter confirms this Observation, for in a professed Discourse on the Subject it uses the same Word in the same Sense, and speaks of the miraculous Endowments of the Preachers of Christianity under this very Title. When it goes on to use it of a different Sort of Gifts, to prevent Mistakes, it expressly distinguishes that it does so, and observes that in some Sense every Believer had received a spiritual Gift. It is used without any Epithet or Mark of Distinction in the preceding Part of the Chapter, where it bore its known and accustomed Signification, of a miraculous Endowment; and when it is applied in a less proper and less usual Acceptation, there it is particularly

noted, and the Meaning of it is ascertained in express Terms. And what then can be drawn from this Passage, but what may very readily be admitted, and may indeed be applied to establish the forementioned Sense of the Term? It is allowed that it may admit of the Signification of a Gift not strictly miraculous, and that when an Author declares that He intends it in such a Sense, it should be accepted according to his own Explanation of it; and from hence it seems natural to infer, that where no such Explanation is used, it should be taken in its accustomed Signification. As Exceptions do not *invalidate* a General Rule, but *confirm* it where no Exception occurs, so the Necessity, which the Compilers of this Chapter found Themselves under of explaining themselves, when they used the Term *Charisma* of Endowments not miraculous, does the more strongly shew the known and received Meaning of that Word.---

It ought farther to be observed against Dr. M. that even here, when it is distinguished not to mean necessarily miraculous Gifts, yet it is not used of common Gifts natural or acquired, but restrained to such as are peculiar to Christians as such. “ The Gifts, the *Charismata* of God which are given by Him thro’ Christ, are different ;” says an ensuing Passage

Passage in the same Chapter §: And then follows an Enumeration of several of them, which are concluded with such an eminent Degree of practical Virtues as is peculiar to the Disciples of Christ. At the lowest therefore it means an *extraordinary Endowment*, as the Author of the *previous Questions* acknowledges; but his Inference from hence does not appear so certain. “If, says He, any
 “Ancient Writer speaks of the Gifts of
 “God, (*i. e.* of these *Charismata*,) with
 “which good Men were particularly en-
 “dowed, it does not follow that such Men
 “had a Power of *working Miracles*, unless it
 “be expressly said, that the Gifts They had
 “were of the *miraculous Kind*.” I think on the contrary, that this “will follow, unless
 “it is expressly said that they were *not* of
 “the *miraculous Kind*.” The Reason is, that tho’ other Attainments were sometimes included together with supernatural Gifts under the general Title of *Charismata*, yet they are never so called in Contradistinction to miraculous Powers, as these often are in Contradistinction to all other Gifts: And therefore when Any One is said to be endowed with these *Charismata*, it is implied that He has

§ Διάφορα γὰρ εἰσι τὰ θεῶν χάρισματα παρ’ αὐτῶν διὰ χρίσε
 δίδόμενα.

miraculous Gifts as well as others, unless it is explained to the contrary.

But there is a more decisive Argument still behind. As the Care taken in the forementioned Chapter to distinguish miraculous Endowments from others in the Christian Church (which are all represented as *extraordinary* in Comparison of the Knowledge and Practice of the Heathen World) shews that such Care was necessary; and the very Manner of speaking proves that *Charismata* would of Course be understood of supernatural Gifts, and would properly be so understood, being primarily so applied by the Writers of these Constitutions themselves; so if any express Evidence can be produced from any of the Primitive Writers, that this Term was so used and understood amongst them, this might well be hoped satisfactorily to determine this Question. Now St. *Chrysostom*, (as Mr. *Brooke* has observed before me, P. 82.) in his Comment upon that Chapter in St. *Paul's* Epistle to the *Corinthians*, where the various *χαρίσματα* of the Holy Ghost are specified, uses the Word *χάρισμα*, as if it had been in a manner appropriated by St. *Paul*, and the Ecclesiastical Writers, to that Signification. Tom. X. Hom. 29. in Epist. 1. ad Cor.

The next Passage, referred to by my Father, Dr. *M.* did not choose to leave to the Force

Force of what his Defender has said on it, but has taken it again under his own Consideration. And first He thought fit to amend his State of the Case, which indeed much needed it; to which He ought to have added an Acknowledgment, that He had misrepresented it before. For after citing a Passage from *Ignatius*, in which that Saint desires the Christians at *Rome* not to use any Means to prevent his Martyrdom, He then tells us, that from these Words this learned Person (speaking of my Father) infers, *that the Prayers of the Primitive Christians had the Power to disable the Wild Beasts from assaulting the Martyrs, who were exposed to them in the Amphitheatres.* But if we look into the Dissertation referred to, We shall find that my Father does not cite one Word of this Passage referred to by Dr. M. but another Passage, which is very plain and full to his Purpose. His Words are---*Et vero ex Epistolâ ad Romanos intelligimus Martyribus nonnullis datum ne possent in illos Bestiæ immissæ sævire. Proinde illud à Romanis obnixissimis precibus contendit, ne eorum orationibus id in suâ Causâ contingeret. Sunt enim illa Divini Martyris verba mellitissima: 'Οναίμην τῶν θηρίων τῶν ἐμοὶ ἡτοιμασμένων, ἀκαὶ εὐχραι σύντομα μοι εὐγηθῆναι. ἀ καὶ κολακέωσω συντόμως με καταφαγεῖν* (ὅχ "ΩΣ ΠΕΡ ΤΙΝΩΝ ΔΕΙ-

ΔΕΙΛΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΑ ὍΤΙ Χ' ἩΨΑΝΤΟ)

καὶν αὐτὰ δὲ ἀκοντα μὴ θέλη ἐγὼ προσβιάσομαι

Diff. Iren. II. § 30. Nothing can be more evident than that it is from this last cited Passage that my Father argues; (Sunt enim illa, &c.) and the Inference that He draws is no more than what is plainly contained in them, *viz.* that the Wild Beasts were sometimes miraculously restrained from touching the Christians, who were exposed to them. That his Meaning might not be mistaken, He has printed the Words "ΩΣΠΕΡ, &c. in Capitals. But tho' these Capitals stared Dr. M. in the Face, He thought fit to stop short and pass them by, tho' He quotes the Words immediately preceding; and then adds that the Passage itself has not the least Reference to any thing miraculous.---This was the Gentleman, who assured Us, that We should in his Performance "find none of the Arts commonly employed by Disputants, either to perplex a "good Cause, or to palliate a bad one." I hope indeed the Arts of such foul Misrepresentation are not commonly employed by Disputants, whatever other Faults They are liable to fall into, when the Saw of Controversy grows warm in their Hands, as Mr. Norris ingeniously expresses it. If Dr. M. thought that the Consequence did not follow
from

from the Passage referred to; it was his Business to shew that it did not; but it was not common Justice to omit the Reference so particularly distinguished, and to represent my Father as arguing only from another Passage, which alone was not so full to his Point.

Dr. *M.* seems to have been conscious of this Omission, for in his *Vindication* He has referred to this particular Passage, tho' He has not been so just as to observe, that it was the very Passage referred to by my Father, and on which He principally built the forementioned Assertion. Dr. *M.* now argues, that if my Father's Interpretation of St. *Ignatius's* Request had been the true Meaning of it, "it would imply that the Efficacy of such Prayers had been tried in other Cases of Martyrdom, prior to that of *Ignatius* : Yet no such Fact," He says, "is to be found in all History, nor any Mention made of it by the Apostles or Apostolic Writers, except by a single Intimation in this very Epistle, where *Ignatius* says, that He would encourage the Wild Beasts, that they might be sure to devour Him, and not serve Him, as They had done some, whom out of Fear, They had not touched." (P. 20.) Now This, which He is pleased to call an *Intimation*, is a very clear and express Testimony of the Fact

which

which is here called for ; and it is the more decisive to the Purpose to which it is applied, for being found *in this very Epistle*, than if it had occurred elsewhere. Had such an Account been mentioned in any other Author, of some Christians who had been thus miraculously preserved when thrown to the Wild Beasts, by those Beasts appearing afraid to touch them, it might have been said that it was not certain, that *Ignatius* referred to that Case, for that if He had, it might have been expected that He would have plainly mentioned it : Whereas now that He has expressly specified it, it is hard indeed, that We will not allow the Martyr to know his own Meaning and to explain Himself. He appears throughout the whole Epistle apprehensive that Those, to whom He wrote, might prevent his Martyrdom, and in this Place He very explicitly shews the Grounds of his Apprehensions, and the Manner in which He thought his Deliverance might be effected by a supernatural Restraint thrown on the Wild Beasts which should devour Him, as had happened, He says, in the Case of some former Christians. The Event, which He feared, was plainly somewhat distinct from any Favour which could arise from *Intercession* to Prince or People, and such as was not to be effected by any natural Means whatsoever.

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He does not say that He was afraid that the Wild Beasts should not be let loose upon Him, but his Concern was, lest They should not assault Him, as They had refused to do some other Christian Brethren. His Words are emphatical, and exclude the only imaginable Suggestion of making Interest with the Keepers to feed and fill them, that They might not be tempted by Hunger to devour Him. For besides that this Scheme was impracticable, as being certainly penal to Those who had dared to attempt it; besides that Wild Beasts will tear and kill when they do not devour, the very Words used shew that this was not the Case; for He does not say barely that the Beasts did not touch them, but that they visibly expressed an *Awe* at the Presence of the Confessors, and were *afraid* to touch them. Now how was this to be brought about, and by what Means did He think that the Brethren could thus stop the Mouths of Lions in his Behalf, but by the Efficacy of their *Prayers*? Let Us compare a few of his own Expressions on the Occasion. At the Beginning of the Epistle He says, *But I fear your Love, lest it do me an Injury: For it is easy for You to do what You please.* φοβῆμαι γὰρ τὴν ὑμῶν ἀγάπην, μὴ αὐτὴ με ἀδικήσῃ· ὑμῶν γὰρ εὐχερές ἐστιν ὃ θέλετε ποιῆσαι. This could not possibly be true, unless He

meant

meant it of their Interest in the Court of Heaven by their united Supplications. They could not easily do what They pleased either with the Populace or the Magistracy, nor has Dr. M. attempted to reconcile his Supposition in this Place with the contemptible Account of the Christians in the first Ages, which He has elsewhere given Us. *Ignatius* in another Part shews farther, that He spoke not of any Application to the Emperor or to the People, but of the Power which They might have over the Wild Beasts themselves, *I beseech You that You shew not an unseasonable Good Will towards me; suffer me to be Food to the Wild Beasts.* Παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς, μὴ εὐνοια ἀκαιρῶ γένησθε μοι. Ἀφετέ με θηρίων εἶναι ἑορᾶν, and again, *Rather encourage the Beasts, that They may become my Sepulchre.* Μᾶλλον κολλήεσθε τὰ θηρία, ἵνα μοι τάφῳ γένωνται. This Antithesis seems to imply (especially when considered together with that Passage following in the Epistle, which speaks expressly of the Wild Beasts having been restrained in some Instances) that They might hope to prevent his Death, not by making Interest for Him with the Powers *above* or *below*, but by a Method, which had already proved successful in some Instances, by praying to God to over-rule and restrain the Fury of those Wild Beasts to which He was to be exposed.

Ignatius

Ignatius intreats them on the contrary rather to encourage those Devourers, that He might fall by them, than to endeavour by any Means to still their Rage. If We allow Him therefore to be his own Interpreter, it is plain that He never thought of the *Christian Brethren at Rome offering or using their Interest to preserve Him from that cruel Death which He was then going to suffer*, which is Dr. M's Interpretation of it. Had This been his Apprehension, He would have expressed Himself much otherwise, and would have taken some Notice of their Application to the Rulers to save Him. In disswading them from it, some Phrase or Intimation must have occurred concerning such Kind of *Intercession*. He would not have confined all his Discourse to their Influence over the *Beasts*, and to their Applications to Heaven by *Prayer* (as I have before shewn that He has done) if He had only feared their Interest amongst their Fellow-Creatures.

Upon the Whole, My Father inferred Nothing from the Writings of *Ignatius*, but what the Words produced from Him do plainly express or imply, and what the Review of the whole Epistle does more strongly confirm.

Dr. M's next Objection is, that "the Martyr acquaints the *Romans*, that He had
" written

“ written to the other Churches, and signi-
 “ fied to them all, that He was willing to
 “ die for God, unless They, the *Romans*,
 “ should hinder Him :” From whence He
 infers, that the Hindrance which He so much
 dreaded, was not to arise from Prayers, but
 from “ some other Means, which were pe-
 “ culiarly practicable to the Christians of
 “ *Rome*, and of no other Church whatsoever.”
 But this likewise is founded on some Degree
 of Misrepresentation. *Ignatius* did not write
 to all the other Churches, that He was fear-
 ful of being deprived of the Honour of Mar-
 tyrdom by Means of the Christian Brethren
 at *Rome*, for We find no such Fear expressed
 in his Epistles to Any of them. But *He*
wrote and signified to them all, that He was
willing to die for God; and when He comes
 to mention this to the *Romans*, He inserts
 this Clause, *unless You hinder me*. He ex-
 presses to them his Apprehensions arising
 from them, which He had omitted in his
 Letters to other Churches. But says Dr. *M*.
 “ If this Hindrance was to be effected by
 “ their Prayers, surely the Prayers of every
 “ other Church must have been as effectual,
 “ and as much to be apprehended by *Ignatius*
 “ *as those of the Romans* :” That they
 might have been as effectual, if the Mem-
 bers of each Church were equally pure and
 holy,

holy, We need not dispute; but that they were as much to be apprehended by *Ignatius*, there is no certain or probable Reason to conclude. As *Rome* was appointed to be the Scene of his Execution, it was most likely that the Christians of that Place would be most deeply affected with it, and be most solicitous, if possible, to prevent it. They who were to be the sorrowful Eye-Witnesses of his Martyrdom, if it took Effect, might for that very Reason be more desirous than Others, to avoid the Spectacle, and to preserve his useful Life. The Enjoyment of his Presence longer amongst them, and the Advantage which They might hope to reap from so eminent a miraculous Interposition openly wrought amongst themselves in a Place of such Eminence and Concourse, might be farther Inducements to them to desire and to attempt his Preservation by supernatural Means. These were Considerations, in which the *Ephesians*, the *Magnesians*, the *Trallians*, the *Philadelphians*, the *Smyrnæans*, and all *absent* Churches were not concerned, and therefore *Ignatius* had not the same Reason to apprehend this Method of interposing from them as He had from the *Romans*. He might perhaps from the Probability of the Case foresee, that these last would thus apply themselves to solicit Heaven for

his Preservation ; or He might know from sure Intelligence that They were preparing Themselves for this Service, and that *Prayers were already made without ceasing of that Church unto God for Him*, which He desires them rather to convert into Petitions for his Constancy and Perseverance under his Trial. On either Supposition the Manner of his Writing to them was Pious and Proper, and the Reason is very clear, why He mentions this Circumstance to them, and to them only. He would not disswade other Churches from that, which He had no particular Reason to suppose that they would think of, (which might have been interpreted into a Hint of the Practice) but where He either strongly presumed, or was actually assured, that They would supernaturally attempt what could not be hoped for from any Human Means, there He earnestly cautions them against it, and entreats them to forward and not to hinder his much-wished for Martyrdom. The Distinction is very obvious, and the Grounds of it were peculiar to the Place where He suffered, not because there only Any Interest could effectually be made (for no such Interest could any where be made) but because there, where He was soon to be present, his Life would be thought most desirable, and his Death most afflicting, and
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of Course all possible Endeavours would be most likely to be used in his Behalf. It is farther to be added, that as He opens the *Cause* of his Apprehensions, in the Examples which had happened of this Kind before, and as He mentions this only in his Epistle to the *Romans*, and in a Manner which seems to imply that they well knew them before, it is most probable, that these triumphant Instances had befallen some eminent Christians at *Rome*; and this might be another Reason, why He who was so zealous of the Honour of Martyrdom, might be particularly fearful of failing of it in the same Place.

The Whole of this Method of Reasoning is much confirmed by a Review of the *Epistles* of St. *Ignatius*, and of the *Account* of his *Martyrdom*. He did not doubt the equal Efficacy of the Prayers of other Churches, and therefore He expressly solicits them in his own Behalf; that He might speedily attain the Honour He so ardently desired: But not being apprehensive of any extraordinary Interposition from them for his Preservation, He suppresses any Intimation of it, and asks their Prayers in a more general Manner. In the *Martyrdom* of *Ignatius* We read that the Churches of *Asia* honoured this Holy Man by the Attendance of their Bishops, Priests and Deacons at *Smyrna*; and that He en-

treated them all, but more particularly Polycarp, to contend with God in his Behalf, that being suddenly taken by the Beasts from the World, He might appear before the Face of Christ. (Martyr. Ign. § 9.) In his Epistle to the Ephesians He says, *for Christ I bear about these Bonds, those spiritual Jewels, in which I would to God that through your Prayers I might arise : Of which I intreat You to make me always Partaker, that I may be found in the Lot of the Christians of Ephesus,* and § 11. In his Epistle to the Magnesians He says, *Be mindful of me in your Prayers, that I may attain unto God---For I stand in Need of your Joint-Prayers in God, &c.* § 14. and again to the Trallians---*Pray also for me ; who thro' the Mercy of God stand in Need of your Prayers, that I may be worthy of the Portion, which I am about to obtain, that I be not found a Reprobate.* § 12. These Passages shew plainly that He did not undervalue the Prayers of other Churches, or think that there was a peculiar superior Efficacy in those of the Romans ; but that his particular Application to them not to prevent his Martyrdom by their Prayers, proceeded from some such just Grounds of Apprehension, as those forementioned, particularly relative to them.

I had observed farther on this Head, that *Ignatius* having been sentenced to Death by
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the Emperor Himself, who was at this Time far absent from *Rome*, there was no Authority left sufficient to reverse the Imperial Decree; and that therefore *Ignatius's* Request could not refer to their making Interest for Him, but to the Use of some supernatural Means in his Behalf. This Dr. *M.* censures as “ trifling and declamatory, grounded on “ loose Conjecture and an imperfect Knowledge of the History of those Times,” as He proposes to shew. Should We not then expect that He should have shewn, that there were some Limitations on the Emperor's Power in this Case; that there was some farther Reserve in favour of condemned Criminals; or that there was some Example of a Sentence being reversed, which yet had been passed by the Emperor in Person? But Nothing of this Kind is proved, or offered to be proved. We are amused with the Account of the *Gladiators*, where the People had a Right, by Prescription, to save the Life of the conquered Party, which every One knows to be true, and equally sees to be Nothing to the present Purpose: But Dr. *M.* says, “ the Case was the same with regard to Persons condemned to be thrown “ to the Beasts, where, if the Mob had taken a Fancy to reserve the Life of Any “ One in the same Manner, They would

“ certainly have been gratified in it.” This is a bare unsupported Assertion, grounded on loose Conjecture, and, I will not say, an *imperfect Knowledge* of the History of those Times, but an *imperfect Representation* of it. The distinguishing Circumstance referred to is left entirely out of the Question, and not a Syllable is said to the Case of this Martyr’s having receiv’d his Sentence from an uncontrollable Authority. Even the Assertion itself as expressed by Dr. M. shews his Consciousness that this Case of condemned *Criminals* was not parallel to that of the *Gladiators*. He does not say, as in the former Instance, that “ if a Clamor was raised in Favour of the Life of the Person, who was about to suffer, it was always granted to the Demand of the Assembly ;” but only, that “ if the Mob had taken a Fancy to reserve the Life of any One, (that was thrown to the Beasts) in the same Manner, They would certainly have been gratified in it.” Now Every Circumstance, in which these Cases differed, shews the Uncertainty and the Improbability of what is here asserted.

In the first Place the Performance of the Gladiators was a voluntary Exercise, undertaken for Hire for the Entertainment of the People, wherein They knew on what Terms
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They engaged, and that They were to stand to the Courtesy of the People for their Lives, in Case They were vanquished. This prevailed with them to exert themselves vigorously, to give Diversion to the People by their Skill and Courage, that at the worst Event They might have *their Favour* for their Security. And as to the *Slaves*, which were sold to this Service, which was chiefly when these Entertainments first commenced, They had this Circumstance of their Servitude to recommend them farther to Compassion, if They behaved well, and had pleased the Spectators by their Performances. Whereas *Criminals*, as such, were justly obnoxious to the People, and could have no Reason to expect to raise the Pity of the Multitude, and incline them to prevent their Sufferings, when They were no other than the just Reward of their Deeds. The Gladiators were innocent, except with Respect to their Profession, and in that They placed some Merit as calculated for the Diversion of the Public; so that They had no Reason to fear the Resentment of an injured Multitude, unless They offended them by a Cowardice or Ignorance unsuitable to their Order and Profession. Whereas *Capital Offenders* were of Course to be considered as Enemies to the Public, and if such a Privilege had

been reserved to the People, and had been as often practised as in the other Case, it would have been inconsistent with the Execution of Publick Justice.

Again, Those who in this Method suffered the Penalty of their supposed Crimes, had not the same Means of recommending themselves to the Favour of the People. In the Combats between Man and Man, the dextrous and resolute Use of their several Arms was what yielded the Satisfaction, and ingratiated them with the Spectators. Whereas the *Criminals*, who were exhibited only to be torn to Pieces and devoured by the Wild Beasts, were not always furnished with Arms for their own Defence; and if They had, yet unless They had been trained to the Exercise of them, (which must be quite accidental) They could give no Diversion by their Feats of Skill, on which alone the Hopes of the vanquished Gladiator was founded. There were indeed Gladiators, who prepared for this Exercise, and undertook to combat with Wild Beasts; but these are not the Persons that Dr. M. speaks of, but such as were *condemned* to be thrown to the Beasts: Nor could the same Favour, for a peculiar Reason, be shewn to vanquished Gladiators of this Sort, as to Those who combated with their own Species. The Conqueror in that Case
stood

stood attentive to the Signal of the People for the Preservation or Destruction of his Foe; whereas This was not to be expected of Beasts kept wild for the very Purpose, and enraged by Assaults, but He, who failed of Victory, must of Course expect to perish in the Attempt.

Again, This Method of throwing supposed Criminals to the Wild Beasts, was then a new or a very unusual Sort of Punishment. We have no Account of it before it was applied by Persecutors to Christians, for whose Destruction it seems by malicious Cruelty to have been devised. It was never used to Any but Those who were supposed to be the Worst of Men, in whose Favour the Intercession of the People could not be expected, and in this very Light it was applied for the Martyrdom of Many of the Professors of the Gospel. Dr. M. Himself allows that the Persecutions of the Church were frequently brought on and forced as it were upon the Government by the Rage and Clamors of the Populace, and therefore as this Punishment was then as it were appropriated to the Name and Title of *Christians*, it cannot well be supposed that there had been a single Instance, in which the Mob had taken a Fancy, as Dr. M. expresses it, to preserve the Life of any Person so condemned, or from whence it can
be

be inferred that They would certainly have been gratified in it, if They had desired it.

The Reason, which Dr. *M.* has assigned, why the People might be moved to Compassion in this particular Case, is founded on a Misrepresentation of the Nature of the Sentence passed on *Ignatius*, and an entire Omission of the Authority of it, which was the very Point which had here been urged against Him. When He represents the People as capable of being moved by the Sight of “an infirm Old Man, incapable of giving them any Diversion by any Sort of Resistance to the Beasts,” (P. 24.) He seems to have forgot, that this was the very Sight which the People expected. They did not look for Him in a *Gladiatorial* Capacity, or imagine that the Ancient Prelate was to enter the Lists with Arms of Self-Defence. His Sentence was not to combat with the Wild Beasts, which would have been ridiculous in itself; but to be thrown to them to be destroyed; and the *Delight of the Roman People*, which as the Dr. observes, the Emperor proposed in it, was not in the Sight of so unsuitable a Battle, but in the Destruction of so eminent a Patron of the Christian Cause. This would be sure to gratify the Populace in their Rage and Malice against this Cause, before represented; and This apparently was the Reason, why

why He sent the Martyr so far to his Execution.

But there is not a Word said, by Way of Argument, to the main Point of the Impossibility of an inferior Magistrate's reversing the Sentence of the *Emperor* Himself in a Capital Case. The Assertion indeed is repeated, that
 “ the presiding Magistrate from the Nature
 “ of his Office was intrusted always of Course
 “ with a discretionary Power of gratifying
 “ the People in any Demand of that Sort,
 “ that is, when they petitioned for the Life
 “ of any Person.” This, however true in the Case of *Gladiators*, is more than has yet been proved, where the *Punishment of the Criminals*, for Capital Offences, was intended in these Spectacles, as well as the Entertainment of the Publick. And if This was proved likewise, the Difficulty would yet remain in its full Force in the present Case, where the Emperor in Person had sat in Judgment, had passed a definitive Sentence, and transmitted it to subordinate Officers at a Distance to be put in Execution. The Supreme Authority of the Emperors in judicial Cases, as well as Others, is so clearly established in the History of them All, and *Ignatius's* Case was so singular, in having been heard and condemned by *Trajan* Himself, that He could have no Thought of being saved by
 Interest

Interest made afterwards to inferior Magistrates at *Rome*: Nor could Any Thing make this Supposition probable or possible, but some Clause in some Constitution relating to it, or some express Example to the Point in Hand; neither of which Dr. *M.* thought fit to produce. It may farther be observed, that *Trajan* appears by this Relation to have been at this Time highly incensed against the Christians, and particularly against *Ignatius* for his bold Confession, on which Account the Reversal of that Sentence would have been more dangerous, and therefore less probable. I have been the longer on this Head, because Dr. *M.* has treated it with peculiar Scorn, and a most groundless Triumph; whereas the strictest Review of every Circumstance will, I believe, confirm the Point at first inferred from hence, that *Ignatius* in the Passage spoken of had certainly a View to a miraculous Deliverance.

On the Subject of Visions and Revelations Dr. *M.* has been forced to alter the State of the Question, and to do, as He has charged his Opposers with doing, *change Hands* on the Occasion. At first his Attempt was to shew that no miraculous Powers were continued to the Church after the Days of the Apostles, and He Himself reckoned *Prophetic Visions* as One of those miraculous Gifts, which

which He attempted to disprove. But being aware what Evidence would be offered against Him on this Head, He seemed in one Place to give up this Point, by saying, that “ if it “ should appear probable to Any, that They “ were favoured on some Occasions with extraordinary Illuminations, Visions, or Divine “ Impressions, yet the Gifts of this Sort were “ merely personal, granted for their particular “ Comfort, and reaching no farther than “ themselves.” The contrary of this was shewn, and no Sort of Answer is offered to it. “ If, said I, the History of the Predictions of St. *Ignatius* and St. *Polycarp* be “ real,” (as Dr. *M*’s Distinction calculated to evade them, seemed to allow) “ then they “ might be both a *Support* to *them*, and an “ Evidence to Others of the Truth of what “ They taught ; for Nothing can be a stronger “ Proof of Divine Assistance than a Spirit “ of Prophecy.” A Gentleman, who seems sufficiently disposed to favour Dr. *M*’s Argument, has laid great Stress upon this Point, and seems to think Nothing can render Miracles credible at all, but the Conjunction of prophetic Gifts with them. In this Light there is still a more immediate Connection betwixt this Endowment and the Others, and if it be shewn that They had Divine Assistance in this Instance, it will be more easily presumed
and

and more readily credited that They had the same supernatural Support in other Instances. Here therefore Dr. *M.* appears to be in some Distress, whether He should give up his first Design, or his last-mentioned Concession, and endeavours still to reconcile them, which was beyond his Power. “ Whether, says “ He, the Predictions spoken of be real or “ not, it is certain that they are nothing to “ the Purpose of our present Controversy, as “ not being the Effect of any standing Power “ granted to the Church for the Conversion “ of Heathens.” (P. 26.) Well then, the State of the Controversy is now quite altered; and He should I think have altered his Title-Page too. He should have told Us there, as well as in the Middle of this his Vindication, that “ whether God has wrought any “ Miracles or not since the Days of the A- “ postles, is an Inquiry, which He does not “ at all enter into; and that the single Point “ which He maintains, is, that the Church “ had no standing Power of working any.” (P. 33.) This however certainly was not the Proposal which at first He offered to the World. That professedly was to shew, that “ We have no sufficient Reason to believe “ upon the Authority of the Primitive Fa- “ thers, that any such (miraculous) Powers “ were continued to the Church after the “ Days

“ Days of the Apostles.” He was supposed to mean what He said, and was therefore understood to be arguing against all miraculous Interpositions. His Management of the Argument confirmed this Notion of it, for He particularly allowed *prophetical Gifts* to be a Species of miraculous Gifts, and argued against them as such : Whereas now it seems they may be given up as nothing to the Purpose of the present Controversy, as not being, He says, the Effect of any standing Power granted to the Church for the Conversion of Heathens.

But why was not some Proof added likewise for this Opinion ? Why may not *Prophetical Gifts* as well as any Others be considered as the Effect of a standing Power granted to the Church for “ the Conversion of the Heathens ? ” Some, We see, think them more convincing than any other Species of miraculous Gifts, at least they must be allowed to be most convincing in Conjunction. For having explained the *Hypothetical* Manner of putting this Argument, I will use it again. If St. *Polycarp's* Prediction of his own Death was *real*, must not the Foreknowledge of it by Those to whom He communicated it, and their View of the speedy Completion of it, be a very satisfactory Proof to them of his Pretensions, and of a supernatural

tural Assistance attending Him? Can this Gift be said to have been merely Personal, granted only for his particular Comfort, and reaching no farther than Himself? The Confirmation of Those who were already Disciples, and the Conversion of such Gainsayers as were acquainted with it, were Ends which it seems most immediately calculated to promote. I do not see what particular Comfort it could be to St. *Polycarp* to foresee that He should be burnt alive; but it was certainly to the Comfort of the Church, and might probably tend to the Enlargement of it, to observe that Christ had not yet left his Disciples without such extraordinary Endowments as those of Prophetical Visions and Revelations. The same is to be observed, and was observed by me in other Instances, where such Gifts did answer some personal End, that they answered likewise the farther Purpose of an Evidence of the Commission and Support given them by Heaven. Perhaps We may judge the better of this by supposing it to be a present Case. Should Providence think fit to grant miraculous Powers again for the Conversion of Unbelievers of our Times, would Any be more likely to prove effectual than that of *Prophecy*? I question whether after all the Difficulties which have been raised amongst Us, concerning the Powers

Powers of Nature, and the Obscurity of Causes and Effects, This might not be the most convincing of Any. *Prophecy* is a solemn Call to Men to consider and examine the Event; and when it plainly answers, may less admit of Evasion, than a Miracle strictly so called, which is wrought immediately in Any One's Presence. At least We could not say, that This had no Connection with the Claim to other Miracles, for This would clearly prove that Providence saw some supernatural Gifts still necessary or expedient; and if some are established, This will obviate all Objections against the Credibility of the Rest. For it will be difficult to assign a Reason, why those Gifts, which were merely personal, and granted for the particular Comfort of some few Individuals, reaching no farther than to themselves, should be continued; and yet those, which were of more general Use for the Conviction of Unbelievers, and Confirmation of Christians in the Faith, should be totally withdrawn.

Dr. M. seems now to be aware of this, and to think that He had given too much Advantage by the forementioned Sentence. He now retracts the seeming Concession, and chooses to say with his Defender, *Let it be understood, that We dispute the Facts.* The only additional Argument here used to in-

lidate them, is, that “the very Matter of
 “ these Prophecies would render the Notion
 “ contemptible to all Men of Judgment.”
 “ In one of these Passages St. *Ignatius* inti-
 “ mates, that He had been instructed by the
 “ Holy Spirit, concerning *the Divisions of the*
 “ *Church of Philadelphia*. And in another
 “ St. *Polycarp*, by Means of a Vision, is said
 “ to have foretold his own Death, and the
 “ Manner of it, three Days before it hap-
 “ pened.” (P. 26, 27.) And What is there
 in the *Matter* of Either of these Prophecies
 that should render them contemptible? Are
 They not parallel to others, which, if We
 believe the Scriptures, We know were given
 by Divine Impulse? Does not St. *Paul* fore-
 tell such Divisions and Corruptions in the
 Church of *Ephesus*, where He is speaking
 expressly of what the Holy Ghost witnessed
 in an extraordinary Manner? *Acts* xx. Does
 He not very little before his Death, prophe-
 tically warn them of it, by saying that *the*
Time of his Departure was at Hand? 2 Tim.
 iv. 6. Or if This be thought to have been
 easily foreseen from his Situation at that Time,
 the Testimony of St. *Peter* is more decisive.
Knowing this that shortly I must put off this
my Tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ
has shewed me, 2 Pet. i. 14. Now does the
Matter of these Predictions render them con-
 temptible?

temptible? If not, why is the very same Thing contemptible in another like Instance? And why are such Objections introduced on all Occasions by a professed Believer, as are of equal Force, if of any, against the Authority of the Gospel?

Farther, He should have remembered that He was arguing here from the *Silence* of these Apostolical Writers. If therefore They claimed *any* of the Gifts of the Apostolick Age, this overthrows his Argument, even tho' We should suppose those Claims to be groundless. If They represent themselves, or others their Contemporaries, as favoured with *extraordinary Illuminations* or *Visions*, 'tis plain that they thought that Some at least of the Gifts of the Apostolick Age still subsisted, and that they were not all actually withdrawn. Let Us review that whole Passage referred to in *Ignatius*, of which Dr. M. has given Us only one Clause, and that with a very visible Air of Contempt. He might possibly have a very contemptible Notion of the Obedience due to Bishops, and might not think Himself obliged to treat them with Respect, or even with common Decency, but very good Reasons may be and have been assigned, why Obedience to Bishops was then so particularly insisted on.---The whole Passage runs thus---
For although Some would have deceived me ac-

cording to the *Flesh*; yet the *Spirit* being from
 God is not deceived. For it knows both whence
 it comes, and whither it goes, and reproveth the
Secrets of the Heart. I cried whilst I was
 with You; I spake with a loud Voice, Attend
 to the Bishop, and to the Presbytery, and to the
 Deacons. Now Some supposed that I spake this
 as foreseeing the Division that should come a-
 mong You. But He is my Witness, for whose
 Sake I am in Bonds, that I knew Nothing from
 any Man. But the Spirit spake, saying on
 this wise, &c. We see here that Ignatius re-
 presents Himself as incapable of being de-
 ceived by the Seducers of those Times, be-
 cause assisted by the Spirit of God; that this
 Spirit of God was able to reprove the *Secrets*
of the Heart; that He foresaw the Divisions
 that should come amongst the *Philadelphians*,
 not by Information of Man, but by the Spi-
 rit; and that it was by this Spirit He had
 forewarned and instructed them in their Duty.
 The Admonitions and Instructions then given
 did indeed, as I have before observed, re-
 quire no particular Inspiration, being Ad-
 vices, which might properly have been ap-
 plied on any Occasion; but the Foresight of
 the Occasion, was that which here shewed
 the extraordinary Assistance. Justly then
 from this Passage does Archbishop Wake in-
 fer that Ignatius was endued with a large
 Portion

Portion of the Spirit: And with Him concurs the learned Dr. *Smith*, who gives the same Interpretation of this Place. What then becomes of this boasted Argument from the Silence of these Apostolical Fathers?

Dr. *M.* offers a farther Distinction to excuse his Confusion and Inconsistency on this Head. First He says, that “ it is allowed “ on all Sides, that the Apostolic Fathers “ make no Mention of any standing miraculous Powers as indulged to the Church “ in their Days.” How can this be said, after the Attempts which were made to shew, that They spoke of the Church as still *blessed with every extraordinary Gift*, without any Distinction with Respect to the preceding Age, when such standing Powers are confessed to have been given? The Reason why They were not more explicit and large on this Subject, was observed, I think, by Every Writer that appeared against Dr. *M.* namely, that the Apostolick Fathers wrote only *practical* Exhortations to Believers, not *argumentative* Discourses for the Conviction of Adversaries; but this plain and weighty Reason Dr. *M.* thought fit to pass over in Silence, neither disproving nor evading it, but still arguing on their supposed Omission of it as a Proof that They knew Nothing of any such miraculous Powers amongst them. But

whatever was his own Opinion in this Matter; it was not fair to represent this as allowed by *all*, which He knew was disputed by Several; that is, that They make no Mention of any standing miraculous Powers in their Days. This however He gives as a Reason, why Visions in those Days could not in any Sort belong to the Question in Dispute: repeating again that they were merely Personal, which is not true of such Visions as were *prophetic*. But, He adds, when miraculous Powers were publickly claimed and offered to Examination, and these were particularly enumerated in the Catalogue, “ then they “ became the proper Subject of his Work, “ and required an Examination as well as “ any other Gifts.” (P. 29.) But why so, if still they were merely personal? or how came They to be less Personal, in the Time of these Fathers, than they were a Century before? There must be a Mistake in some Part of the Argument or Other. Either these may be considered as of some Use in the Church for the Conversion of Heathens, or they have no Relation to his Question, as it is stated at present; and on this Supposition He wasted his own Time, and misemployed that of his Answerers, in arguing so long against them. Indeed if there was any Difference in the Case, it was more to his Purpose to have disproved

disproved those earliest Accounts of Visions and Prophecies, which He once seemed disposed to allow, than those later Reports of particular Revelations, which He took so much Pains to invalidate. For if the former were genuine, if Prophetical Gifts continued in the Church, This will be a strong Argument, not only from the Reason of the Thing, that other miraculous Endowments continued likewise, but also from the Expressions used by the Apostolical Fathers, for They could not, with any Truth or Propriety, have talked of being *blessed with every extraordinary Gift*, if They had one amongst them, and not the rest; nor could They well avoid specifying the Distinction on such an Occasion. Whereas the Power of working Miracles may be supposed to have continued in the Church, notwithstanding several of the After-Accounts of Visions and Revelations should be thought not to deserve Credit. Several of these have been misrepresented, and have been found, upon Examination, not to relate to extraordinary and particular Revelations; (see Dr. Church's *Vind.* P. 240, &c.) and of Those which are really spoken of as such, scarce any pretend to be Prophetical; Many of them are delivered merely upon Hearsay; Few of them were upon important Occasions, answerable to such as we read of in the Bible; None of

them are offered to Examination like the Miracles claimed in Evidence of the Truth of Christianity: And therefore these latter may stand the Test, if the Former do not; for it will not follow, that because some Mistakes might happen in Cases in which Men were liable to be imposed upon, therefore They were guilty of wilful Fraud in Cases which They could not but be sufficiently informed in.

Dr. *M.* next charges his Opposers with changing Hands, taking up the contrary Side of the Question, and attempting to confute Him by that very *Silence* of these Fathers with which He had been pressing them. If He meant to hint any Thing of Inconsistency in this Manner of Arguing, it is a plain Misrepresentation. They do not allow that the Silence of the Apostolic Fathers on this Head can be proved; for They think that as much may be produced from them on this Head as can well be expected from their Subject and Manner of Writing. But They insist farther, that Dr. *M.*'s own Supposition of their Silence on this Article would not turn out to the Advantage of his Argument, but as far as it is of any Weight, may strongly be urged on the other Side. We can, in such Cases only, judge from Circumstances, what might be the Occasion of the *supposed Silence*. Dr. *M.* supposes

poses that if Miracles had *continued*, the Apostolical Writers would have mentioned it; I suppose that if Miracles had *ceased*, They would have mentioned it: Which now, as his Defender says, has the best Right and Claim to the Conclusion? I answer as before, They who give the best Reasons for their Opinion. In the first Place then, it is not clear, (to say the lowest) that They have not mentioned the Continuance of miraculous Powers amongst them; but it is very clear that They have not mentioned their Ceasing. Mr. *Toll* gave up their Disclaiming such Powers, and Dr. *M.* has not offered to vindicate what He suggested before on this Point; so that We argue on an uncontested Silence in this Particular; whereas much is offered to shew that there is some Mention in those Writers, of the Continuance of Miraculous Powers.

Again, their *Silence* in the former Case, if real, might be accounted for from the *Practical* Nature of their Writings, wherein They had no Occasion or Call to mention the *standing Evidence* of their Religion; whereas this same Practical Intent would have led them to mention the *Ceasing of Miracles*, if they had ceased, in order to quicken them to higher Degrees of Virtue, which, on this Supposition, was now the only remaining Recommendation and Proof of their Religion.

Dr.

Dr. *M.* cites Part of my Reasoning on this Head. “ It is scarce credible, said I, that
 “ They should no where take any Notice of
 “ so great and sudden an Alteration, as must
 “ have happened, if the principal Leaders of
 “ the Christian Cause, and Governors of the
 “ Church, had all at once been deprived, in
 “ those Times of Adversity, of the Privileges
 “ and Succours, which common Converts en-
 “ joyed in the Generation immediately pre-
 “ ceding.” Dr. *M.* having observed, that
 “ it is granted by all Protestants, that the Go-
 “ vernours of the Church were, in some Age
 “ or other, actually deprived of those miracu-
 “ lous Succours, which their Predecessors en-
 “ joyed, &c. adds, thus Dr. *Dodwell’s* Argu-
 “ ment is utterly confuted by Fact and Expe-
 “ rience, as well as their own Concessions.”
 (P. 31.) But certainly, the Concession that
 they ceased *in some Age or other*, even on the
 Supposition that the Time was not mentioned
 by any Writer, would no way affect or con-
 fute my Argument as before represented. For
 there the Stress was laid on the Improbability
 of their taking no Notice of such an Event, if
 the principal Leaders of the Christian Cause,
 and Governors of the Church, had *all at once*
 been deprived, *in those Times of Adversity*, of
 the Privileges and Succours, which common
 Converts enjoyed in the Age immediately pre-
 ceding.

ceding. Whereas if miraculous Powers ceased not, till *those Times of Adversity* were past, and then ceased *gradually*, as they were less and less wanted, then it would be no Wonder, that a particular Account should not be given of the exact Time when they were finally withdrawn, tho' the Argument would still hold in its full Force with Respect to the Days of the Apostolic Fathers; when Persecutions raged, when the Enemies of the Gospel were triumphant, when Miracles were as much wanted as ever, for the Conviction of Gainfayers, and the Support of Believers.

In such a Case, if Miracles had ceased *all at once*, when they were as much wanted as ever, it is not credible that They should pass over such an Event in total Silence, without any Expressions of Lamentation, or Professions of Resignation, or Exhortations and Prayers suitable to the Occasion. Whereas if the Case was, as We suppose it to be, that they ceased after the Civil Establishment of this Religion, when Persecutions ceased; when other Encouragements concurred with the Evidence already offered to make Way for the Reception of Christianity; when Favours, when Honours and Profits attended the Profession; then if We find no particular Notice taken of the Period when they ceased, yet We may very well account for it. The Ends, for which

which they were originally given, being now no more, the Occasion of their Ceasing being visible; This might prevent any great Degree of Surprize, and any Notion of the Necessity of recording it as an extraordinary Event. This Case was so apparently different from the former, that no Concession of their having ceased in some After-Time, without any distinguishing Confession of it, when it might reasonably be expected that they should cease, can affect the Argument from the Silence of Those who could not fail to have taken Notice of it, if They had *suddenly* been deprived of all supernatural Assistance, when They had all imaginable Occasion for it, and all the Reason in the World to expect it.

Neither therefore is this Argument confuted by Fact and Experience, for as the Situation was not the same with the Professors of Christianity after the Rulers of the World were become of that Number, their Silence or their Account of the Discontinuance of Miracles amongst them, does no way reach the main and principal Consideration. Dr. M. however adds, as the most remarkable Circumstance in the present Question, that in all the “ succeeding Ages, there is not a single
 “ Leader or Governor of the Church, who
 “ either owns any such Cessation, or does not
 “ in the most grave and solemn Manner at-
 “ test

“ test the Continuance of them in great Abundance to his own Age.” Had He then forgot his own Charge against St. *Chrysostom* and St. *Austin*, whom He represented as Guilty of Inconsistency for reporting some Miracles, when in other Passages which He cited from them, They owned and endeavoured to account for the Cessation of miraculous Powers amongst them? In what Manner soever This is to be reconciled, yet They are Both express Witnesses against what is here asserted. And to them some others may be added. Some of them argue upon the Supposition; Others attempt to account for the Fact; and Several are express in the Acknowledgment of it. I will only cite *Isidore Peleusiota*, who says in so many Words, that Miracles were ceased in his Time; (*Isid.* IV. Epist. 80.) Those who would see more Testimonies to this Purpose, may consult Mr. *Brooke’s* Examination, (P. 369.) Some of these cannot be said to have contradicted Themselves in this Article, and Those who lie under this Charge, appear to me to be just as much involved in it as Dr. *M.* Himself, who once at least seemed willing to grant, that there might be some Instances of miraculous Interpositions from Heaven, when yet the standing Power of working Miracles for the Conversion of Heathens was withdrawn. This, which is his new State of the Case, was,

as

as I apprehend, their Old Distinction, and that by which They reconciled the forementioned Declaration of the Cessation of Miracles with their After-Report of some supernatural Events. Their Reasonings and Accounts shew their Meaning in these seemingly repugnant Assertions. They argue, that Miracles being granted for the Conversion of Heathens, they were now no longer necessary on that Account, when Christianity was now established amongst them, by which They refer to the standing Power; and those Stories which They do relate, whether They were imposed upon them or not, happened amongst the Christians Themselves, for their supposed Instruction or Support, which, as Dr. *M.* now allows, is a very different Question.

Dr. *M.* proceeds to mention an Objection, which would very obviously be raised against his former Management of this Argument, and his present State of it; namely, for what Reason He introduced Miracles into the Dispute, which, by his own Confession, have no Relation to it? His Answer is, that “it was
 “ for no other, than to expose the trifling and
 “ frivolous Nature of them,” and to shew how fondly the Christians of this early Age were disposed to give a “miraculous Turn to every
 “ unusual Incident, which might happen to
 “ take Place on any important and affecting
 “ Oc-

“Occasion.” (P. 35.) This very Attempt then implies, that if They were not so fondly disposed, but were competent Judges of Miracles wrought amongst themselves, tho’ not by a standing Power for the Conversion of Heathens, much more must They be presumed to be Judges of those Powers which They claimed and offered to the Examination of Adversaries; and therefore, if Dr. *M.* has failed even in this Attempt, it will turn strongly against Him; and Every Instance which is offered of a miraculous Interposition from Heaven, will be a presumptive Argument that the supernatural Gifts which They claimed, were really continued to them. Nay, the very Manner in which these Miracles were related, (those for Instance, attending the Martyrdom of St. *Polycarp*) whether true or false themselves, are yet a strong and full Testimony of the Opinion and Persuasion of the Christians of those Times. Had They known that Miracles had ceased many Years before, (and they could not but have known it, if it had been so) that *Polycarp* Himself was endued with no miraculous Powers, and disclaimed all Pretensions to them, They could not have used such Language, as They do throughout this Epistle.

Dr. *M.* seems next to charge his Opposers with a gross Misrepresentation of Him. He
says,

says, They “ have still the Confidence to as-
 “ firm, that He does not dispute the Reality
 “ of them, but leaves Them in Possession of
 “ Miracles as great and wonderful as any in
 “ the Christian Church; that He stands con-
 “ victed by his own Concessions, and by ac-
 “ knowledging the Genuineness of the Epistle,
 “ confirms the Genuineness of the Facts re-
 “ lated in it; than which, says He, nothing
 “ can be more senseless and absurd.” I shall
 have Occasion presently to refer to, and to re-
 tort the Acknowledgment in this last Clause;
 I shall hear only observe, that as yet no un-
 warrantable Confidence appears in his Adver-
 saries, except that They presumed to differ
 from Him. They did not assert that Dr. *M.*
 did not dispute the Reality of these Miracles,
 but that He had not disproved them, and that
 in some Places He argued upon a Supposition
 of the Truth of them; that his Reasonings
 were inconsistent; and that in the Particular
 Instance referred to, He was convicted by his
 own Concessions; not because Every Fact must
 be genuine, which is related in a genuine
 Epistle; (as He would represent it) but be-
 cause This Case was so particularly circum-
 stanced, that if the Epistle be admitted to have
 been wrote by the Spectators, and if They
 were credible Witnesses in the other Parts of
 their Report, no particular Objection can lie
 against

against this from the Nature of the Thing, the Miracles reported being as much the *Object of their Senses*, and as strongly attested by them, as any other Part of the Account: And thus I expressly stated the Case.

But it seems Dr. M. did not really speak his own Opinion in this Case. When He called “ *the circular Letter of the Church of Smyrna*, “ one of the most authentic and celebrated “ Pieces in all primitive Antiquity,” He only spoke of it as it was held in the Church, and not as He thought of it Himself. This should, I think, have been signified, or at least hinted at first, that Others might not be charged with Misrepresentation for that, which now looks very like Prevarication in Himself. His *Defender*, who helped him out with a Distinction in a former Case, which He has thought fit to avow, had not the Discernment to find out this, for He says in express Words, “ Dr. “ M. does certainly acknowledge the Letter “ to be *genuine*.” (P. 32.) And tho’ the Dr. thought it ridiculous and unjust to charge Him with weakening the *Faith of History*, yet if *One of the most authentic and celebrated Pieces in all Primitive Antiquity* be at last no other than a Forgery, and was considered as such by the Dr. Himself, even whilst He gave it that high Character, I see not how that Consequence will be evaded, or how We shall

know when He means what He says, so as to be able to form an Argument against his real Opinion. He adds, “ when I mention the
 “ Advertisement annexed to the End of it,
 “ concerning the miraculous Discovery of the
 “ same Piece by a Revelation from *Polycarp*,
 “ will Any imagine that I could believe so
 “ silly a Fiction, tho’ I made no Reflection
 “ upon it.” But He did not describe this under the same Character of One of the most *authentic and celebrated Pieces of Primitive Antiquity*, nor was it ever esteemed such, and therefore this Case is by no Means parallel ; nor does it follow from his After-Mention of a known Forgery, that it was as plain that He did not believe the Genuineness of the Letter itself, which He still acknowledges to have been generally held as authentic by the Church.

But tho’ We are now told that the Miracles attending the Martyrdom of St. *Polycarp*, whether true or false, have no Relation to the Question in Dispute, yet He cannot be content to leave it, but is resolved that We shall have the Circumstance of the *Dove* to discredit all the rest. This, He tells Us,
 “ will upon a fair and critical Examination,
 “ appear to be as authentic a Part of the
 “ Original Piece, as any other miraculous
 “ Fact related in it.” (P. 36.)

“ The

“ The first Edition, says He, of the entire
 “ Epistle, was published by Archbishop *Usher*,
 “ with the Passage of the Dove in it, from
 “ a *Latin* Version, the oldest Copy, as He
 “ tells Us, of the whole Piece, that was any
 “ where extant; supposed to have been writ-
 “ ten soon after the Time of *Eusebius*, and to
 “ be the same, which is mentioned to have
 “ been publicly read in the Churches of
 “ *France*, till the sixth Century: Which
 “ Copy Archbishop *Wake* also declares to be
 “ so well attested, that We need no farther
 “ Assurance of the Facts which it contains.
 “ All the *Greek* Copies are of a later Date
 “ than the *Latin* Version, yet all of them
 “ retain this Article of the Dove: And from
 “ a Collation of these the learned *Cotelerius*
 “ and *Ruinart* published their several Edi-
 “ tions of this same Epistle; both of them,
 “ tho’ Papists, very candid and judicious In-
 “ quirers into the genuine Monument of
 “ Christian Antiquity: And in the last Edi-
 “ tion also, set forth by that eminent and
 “ Protestant Critic M. *Le Clerc*, who was
 “ never suspected either of Superstition or
 “ Credulity, the Dove still kept its Place,
 “ without any Reflection or Censure upon it
 “ by the Editor.” (P. 37.)

Never were more Errors committed in the
 Compass of so short a Paragraph. Had Dr. M.

discovered half so many in the Performance of an Opposer, He would have triumphed much over his Ignorance; but as This was confessedly no Part of *his* Character, there was no Danger of its being retorted. But instead of attempting to assign the Cause of these complicated Mistakes, I shall proceed to point them out. Now Archbishop *Usher* first published this Epistle entire in the *Greek*, from a MS. in the *Bodleian*; and this is the MS. whose Genuineness Archbishop *Wake* thought so well attested, and from this Edition all the Others have been published. Archbishop *Usher* mentions also another *Greek* MS. in the *French King's* Library. *Lambecius* also (Comment. in Bibliothec. Vindobon, L. 8. P. 88.) gives Us an Account of a third in the Library at *Vienna*; but this is imperfect: Whether it has the Article of the *Dove*, or whether it was ever collated, I know not. These are all the *Greek* MSS. of which I can find any Mention made. The Archbishop did also at the same Time with the *Greek* publish the *Latin* Version of this Epistle from two MSS. the one in the *Cotton* Library, the other in that of the Church of *Salisbury*; but This, as He Himself tells Us, is a Paraphrase rather than a Version; nor does He say, that either the Version, or either of the Copies of it that He used, were older than

than any of the *Greek* Copies, or written soon after the Time of *Eusebius*; nor a Word does He say about its Antiquity, only this, that He supposes this Version to be the same which *Gregory of Tours* mentions as being publickly read in the Churches of *France* in the sixth Century (“*Integra vero cum aliorum Sanctorum Actis Græcè, & in Barocciano Oxoniensis Academiæ, & in Mediceo Regis Gallorum; Latine vero & in Ecclesiæ Sarisburiensis, & in Cottonianæ Bibliothecæ Codice MSto reperitur. Quam quidem Versionem, vel Metaphrasim potius, cum Græco Textu conjunctim, eo libentius hic edere placuit, quod eandem esse existimem quam in Ecclesiâ Gallicanâ suo tempore publicè legi consuevisse Gregorius Turonensis significat. Usserij. Præf. ad Act. Ignat. &c.*”) *Ruinart* indeed adds (*Ruinart Præf. ad Acta Polycarpi*) (not that the Copy was written but) that the Version was made soon after the Time of *Eusebius*; but what Reason or Authority He has for this, He does not inform Us. Dr. M. however improves upon both his Authors. He tells us it was read in the Churches of *France till the sixth Century*,---which is very different from and implies a great deal more than---in the *sixth Century*. Other learned Authors had quite a different Notion of this Version which

the Dr. sets forth so pompously. Dr. *Smith* (Præf. ad Ignat. Epist. &c.) calls it (and so on Comparison it will appear to be) a very bad Paraphrase. “ Latina Versio ex Codicibus Cottoniano & Sarisburiensi A D. Usserio desumpta est, potius Paraphrasis appellanda, passim mendosa, inepta & corrupta, quam tamen ob Antiquitatem, Fructumq; aliquem, inde colligendum, retinendam volui— Compertissimum habeo quemlibet Exscriptorem (quod de Græcis quoque Librariis dicendum est) de suo, Explicationis Causâ, prout Animo habebat, addere consuevisse.”

As to Archbishop *Wake*, the Copy that He speaks of is (as I just now said) not the *Latin* Version, but the *Greek* MS in the *Bodleian*: And of this He is made to say a great deal more than ever He did say. He says, this MS. is so well attested, that We need not any farther Assurance of the Truth of it. (P. 16. Ed. 1693.) But Dr. *M.* makes Him say, that We need no farther Assurance of the Facts which it contains. But Archbishop *Wake* knew very well, and Dr. *M.* could likewise observe, when it suited his Purpose, that tho’ a MS. was in the main allowed to be genuine, yet this could give Us no Assurance of the Genuineness of every Clause and Word of it, much less of the Facts which it contains. The Librarian of *Cambridge* could
not

not but know, that there are frequent Disputes and Complaints, among the Learned, of Marginal Notes creeping into the Text,--- of the Carelessness of Transcribers;---and, what is still more, of their adding Comments and Fictions of their own.

But We are told that *all the Greek Copies retain this Article of the Dove* (all which are two, or at the most three) and *that from a Collation of these, the learned Cotelierius and Ruinart published their several Editions.* These learned Men are very much obliged to the Dr. for the Candor, Judgment and Diligence that He has complimented them with. Far be it from me to detract from their Praises; but in the present Case it happens unfortunately that *Cotelierius* Himself tells Us, He had not the good Fortune to meet with any MS. of this Epistle; and therefore He published his Edition from that of *Usher*. The same did *Ruinart* by the *Greek* Original. He compared indeed the *Latin* Version with two MSS. one in the *Colbertine* Library, the other in that of the Monastery of *Preaux*, the latter of which omits this Article of the Dove, and the other ends before the Passage where this Article occurs. None of these Editors indeed thought themselves at Liberty to alter the Copy from whence They published; and therefore They All of them re-

tain this Article; but They All, *Usher*, *Ruinart*, *Cotelerius*, and *Le Clerc* pass this Reflection upon it, that it was not to be found either in *Eusebius* or *Ruffinus*. Archbishop *Wake* in his Translation thought Himself more at Liberty, and therefore He omitted what He judged to be spurious. But it seems the Archbishop should have given Us the Story entire; for “ He observes upon the
 “ Authority of Mr. *Le Moyne*, that *Lucian* is
 “ supposed, under the Character of the *Vul-*
 “ *ture* ascending from the funeral Pile of
 “ *Peregrinus*, to ridicule the Pigeon of *Poly-*
 “ *carp*,” (P. 38.) ’Tis true, that the Arch-
 bishop mentions this as a Conjecture of Mr. *Le Moyne*; but ’tis such a Conjecture, as neither He nor *Le Moyne* Himself paid any Regard to (Var. Sac. Proleg. ad Tom. I.) *Le Moyne*, as well as the Archbishop, denies the Genuineness of this Passage, and argues strenuously against it: But then He adds, that if it were genuine, He should then have thought that *Lucian* alluded to it. But Dr. *M.* Himself has taught Us how to give another Account of this Fancy of *Lucian*. He might probably allude to the Eagle; which was usually let out of the Funeral-Files of the *Roman* Emperors. However, to strengthen this Evidence, We are told that *Lucian* was an Apostate from Christianity. This again
 appears

appears to be a Mistake, for it has no other Foundation than this only, that *Suidas* calls Him *διμήγος* (in other Copies *διμήγος*) which Some have translated a *Preacher*.

Another Confirmation of the Genuineness of this Passage the Dr. draws from a like Miracle mentioned by *Prudentius* in one of his Hymns, where He makes a *Dove* to fly out of the Mouth of *Eulalia* at the Time of her Martyrdom. (P. 39.) But how does it appear that *Prudentius* ever knew or heard of *St. Polycarp's Dove*? And why may We not as well suppose, that the Interpolator of this Epistle took the Hint from *Prudentius*, as that *Prudentius* took the Hint from this Epistle?---But “ a Fiction of so strange a Kind would hardly have been hazarded, “ He thinks, by so pious a Writer, if there “ had not been a Precedent for it.” And which is most likely to have made the Precedent, and to have hazarded a Fiction of so strange a Kind, the whole *Church of Smyrna*, in the second Century, or *Prudentius*, a Poet in the fifth Century, an Age in the Dr's own Judgment, abounding still more in Fables and Fictions?

We have already seen the Dr's Skill in amplifying the Testimonies for this his favourite Dove. We shall find Him full as well skilled in the Art of diminishing. In his

Free.

Free Inquiry He had told Us that “ Mr. “ *Dodwell* and Bishop *Wake* profess to have “ dropt this Circumstance for the Sake of “ rendring the Narrative the less suspected;” whereas They Both expressly specified, that they did not drop it barely for the Improbability of the Fact, but for Want of proper Authority to support it. He has now in his Vindication done the Archbishop the Justice to cite his Words on this Occasion. “ And “ indeed besides the Strangeness of such an “ Adventure, I cannot think, had any such “ Thing truly happened at his Death, that “ not only *Eusebius* should be ignorant of it, “ but that neither St. *Hierom*, nor *Ruffinus*, “ nor the *Menæa* of the *Greek* Church should “ have made the least Mention of it.”--- All this the Dr. with one Stroke of his Pen resolves into the Silence of *Eusebius* only. And why so?---Why, “ the Silence of these “ later Writers is, it seems, of no Weight at “ all: They followed only the Transcript “ of *Eusebius*.” (P. 41.) But how does it appear, that They followed only the Transcript of *Eusebius*? None of them, I think, tell Us so, nor does Any of them refer to *Eusebius*. “ But They were glad to get rid “ of so ridiculous a Fiction.” This is all again the Dr’s own Imagination, and quite inconsistent with what the same fertile Imagination

gination has elsewhere attributed to these very Fathers. These same Men, who discarded this as a ridiculous Fiction, were (if you will believe Dr. M.) “ extremely credulous and superstitious, scrupling no Art or Means, whereby they might propagate their Principles;---of a Character from which Nothing could be expected that was candid and impartial, nothing but what a weak or crafty Understanding could supply towards confirming the Prejudices with which They happened to be possessed;---roundly affirming s true, Things evidently false and fictitious.” (Pref. P. 31, 32.) And in this very Interval, it seems, when Christians were Such as are here described, scrupling Nothing, and ashamed of Nothing, yet endeavouring to get rid of this as a ridiculous Fiction, still, according to this same contradictory Account, it so happened that this very Fiction was at that Time in such good Credit among them as to give Occasion and afford a Precedent for *Prudentius* to hazard another of the same Kind.

The later Writers being thus easily dismissed, and their Omission of this Article accounted for by a Supposition, which is not grounded on the least Reason or Authority, and which is inconsistent with the main Objection

jection elsewhere made against them, *Eusebius's* Evidence is endeavoured to be taken off by telling Us, that *Eusebius* does not give Us here the entire Narrative, but an Abstract of it only, or an Abridgment. (P. 39.) It is strange that the Dr. could fail of observing the Difference between an *Abridgment* and an *Extract*. *Eusebius* Himself tells Us, that He gives Us this Narrative *κατὰ λέξιν*---*Word for Word*. And We find accordingly that He left out only the Beginning and End of this Epistle; the Rest of it We have here entire; and it agrees exactly, bating some slight Variations, with the other Copies of this Epistle, excepting only this Article of the Dove, and that other Clause, which compares St. *Polycarp's* Body in the Flames to Bread, which is baked; which probably are both Interpolations, and proceeded from the same Hand. The Advertisement annexed at the End in the Name of *Pionius*, is, as I before observed, allowed to be a Fiction; and 'tis no improbable Supposition, that the Author of this Fiction might tamper also with the Epistle itself.

There are some farther Circumstances which seem much to favour this Opinion. An Observation may be offer'd even on the Account itself, independently of these Reflections on the external Evidence relating to it,

it, which may shew the great Probability of the Interpolation of the Passage in Question. The Circumstance referred to comes in here very abruptly and breaks in upon the Narrative: Here is a Story of a Dove coming out, and not a Word said afterwards of it, whether it went, or what became of it. Had the Authors of this Epistle mentioned such a surprizing Thing, whether true or false, They would probably have dwelt longer upon it. They could scarce have avoided taking Notice of the Manner, or End, or Use of its appearing, or making some Kind of Reflection or other upon it. Whereas if it crept in by the Mistake of a Letter, thro' the Ignorance or Carelessness of the Transcriber, or was designedly inserted as the slight Mention of a Circumstance, which was elsewhere to be enlarged on, on either Supposition We may account for the Manner in which it is introduced, which is exactly such, as We should naturally suppose it to be in the one or the other of these Cases.

Again, this Article of the Dove is nowhere repeated, as far as appears, by any ancient Author, except in the *Life* of St. *Poly carp*, said to be wrote by one *Pionius*. This very Person may possibly be the Author of the Copy in the *Bodleian*, who has added the *P. S.* at the End, pretending that He transcribed

scribed it from an ancient Copy, which He found out by a Revelation from St. *Polycarp*. And if so, He might be the Author of this Interpolation too, which He might foist in to confirm his own Story, which He had added of his own Invention in the *Life of this Saint*. Who this *Pionius* was, no Body can tell, nor when He lived. *Eusebius* mentions a Person of this Name, who suffered Martyrdom at the same Time with St. *Polycarp*. But this *Life of St. Polycarp* is of much later Date, the Work of some fabulous Author, who might possibly borrow this Name of *Pionius*, designing most absurdly to father his spurious Offspring on Him mentioned by *Eusebius*. But this is offered only as a Conjecture.

Dr. *M.* proceeds to tell Us that “ the Copies of this Narrative appear in *Eusebius*’s “ Time to have been very rare.” (P. 40.) But how this appears, or what Proof He has for it, He does not inform Us. We must be content to take it on his Word. “ We cannot doubt therefore, says He, but that He “ wilfully dropt it out of his Abstract, because Every Body would see it to be a most “ flagrant and shameful Forgery.” It is not easy to find what Premises this Conclusion is founded upon. Did He judge of *Eusebius* from his own Manner of quoting Authors?

Or

Or was it for his Purpose that it should be so, and therefore We must not doubt of it? Were the First Ages of Christianity the most fabulous? And did They in *Eusebius's* Time begin to be ashamed of the Fictions of former Ages? Or is this *Eusebius's* usual Way of quoting Authors? Does He bear the Character of a fabulous and faithless Historian? And does He stand convicted of such Forgeries in other Instances? If None of these Things can be said, We must beg Leave to acquit Him of so foul a Charge, and to dismiss all these idle Surmises as the Fiction of Dr. *M's* own Brain.

In reciting the Testimonies of the following Writers in Relation to supernatural Gifts, Dr. *M.* rightly observes that He is charged with “having added one to the List, which “does not belong to it, and which None of “the Fathers have any where claimed, “namely, *the Gift of expounding the Scriptures.*” (P. 44.) His Design in ascribing such a Claim to them was obvious, in that He thought thereby to prove them Guilty of Forgery, by pointing to some weak Expositions of Scripture which could not be supposed to proceed from Inspiration. He was told therefore that this was said without any Foundation, for that tho’ there was Mention made of expounding the Mysteries of God, there

there was not a Word said of the Holy Scriptures. This He is pleased to call *a pitiful Way of quibbling*; “the Word *Scriptures*, is “not expressly mentioned in the Testimony, “therefore, the Gift of expounding them “cannot be implied in it.” Truly I think this is a very material Observation, and very forcible Inference, that those Writers Themselves have not mentioned any Thing at all about the *Scriptures*, and therefore did not mean any thing about them. But Dr. M. enquires what other Meaning the Gift of *expounding the Mysteries of God* can have, and charges his Opposers with “having given no other in its Place, but leaving the “Words to shift for Themselves.” Whereas I had said clearly and expressly, “Certainly “a Man might have a Knowledge of the “Christian Mysteries supernaturally infused “into Him, or a happy Talent of explaining “them particularly communicated to Him, “without an Infallibility of interpreting all “the Passages of the Old Testament.” I know not what Gifts could be more *distinct* than an immediate Knowledge of the Christian System infused by Inspiration, independent of the written Accounts of it; and a certain Knowledge of the Sense and Connection of those written Accounts, by which even *They* might be offered in Evidence to Others. A
Man

Man might have the former in a supernatural Manner for particular Purposes, as *St. Paul* tells Us, He Himself had, who yet might not have the latter, nor might make any Pretensions to it. The Mysteries of God, as they are mentioned by *Irenæus*, may be allowed to refer, as the Dr. says, to the same Mysteries, which are affirmed by Christ and his Apostles to be revealed to Us in the Holy Scriptures, but his Inference will by no Means follow, that therefore “the Gift of
 “expounding them cannot possibly signify
 “any Thing else than the Gift of expound-
 “ing the most abstruse and difficult Passages
 “of the Scriptures, both of the Old and
 “New Testament.” The Mysteries here spoken of, are as He Himself says, the same with the Doctrines taught by the Gospel, that is, those revealed Truths which relate to the End and the Means of our Redemption. The Gift of expounding them was that of teaching them with Truth, Consistency and Perspicuity, and This Gift in different Persons might be the Effect of natural or supernatural Attainments. Where the Knowledge of these saving Truths was learnt by Instruction from Others, or by a diligent Study of the Holy Scriptures, there a Man might attain this Gift without any Kind or Degree of Miracle; but where it was imme-

diately infused from Heaven, there it was justly ranked amongst supernatural Endowments. But tho' in either Method a Man might know all that was necessary to Salvation, and might justly be esteemed an able Expounder of the Mysteries of God, it would not follow that He must therefore be an infallible Interpreter of all the Historical and Prophetical Parts of the Old Testament, or all the argumentative Parts of the New; which related perhaps particularly to the People to whom they were written, and depended on some Local Customs, or Opinions, or Phrases, or even Methods of Reasoning. It does not follow that because a Man had one Gift, therefore He had every One, yet it can only be by this Connection that it can be inferred, that because a Person was taught in a very different Method, namely, by Inspiration, the same Doctrines which Others are taught in the Gospel, therefore He must necessarily likewise understand every difficult Passage in the Bible from One End of it to the Other. This Distinction is so obvious and was so clearly expressed before, that unless Dr. *M.* expected an implicit Resignation of our Understandings to his positive Assertions, it might have deserved some Notice and Attempt of Evasion.

I had

I had observed likewise that the Gift spoken of in the New Testament understood by Interpreters to mean an *inspired Knowledge* of the true Sense of a *particular* Passage of the *Prophets*, for confirming or explaining some particular Doctrine of the *Gospel*, was *occasional* only, and owing to *sudden Impulses*. To this Dr. M. attempted no Answer, and yet if this be admitted, Nothing can be inferred to his Purpose from the Testimony before Us. For though other Christians, besides the Apostles, were sometimes *occasionally* inspired; in praying, prophesying, or expounding the Scriptures in their religious Assemblies, yet No One, that I know of, since the Times of the Apostles has pretended to claim the Gift of expounding the Scriptures in that extensive Sense described by Dr. M. viz. the Gift of expounding the Scriptures by a Divine Inspiration, (Inqu. P. 116.) a divine and infallible Interpretation of the Scriptures, (Pref. P. 33.) and that of the most abstruse and difficult Passages of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament (Vind. P. 47.) This I say has been claimed by None, excepting the Popes of *Rome*, and perhaps some wild Enthusiasts. The Gift of prophesying or preaching, and That of expounding the Scriptures, were distinct Gifts, and are plainly distinguished by St. Paul. The Words of *Irenæus*

relate to the former, which He affirms to have continued till his Time ; If it be thought probable that the other also subsisted at the same Time, and if Any One should think that *Irenæus* intended to include both, it would not be necessary to dispute it with Him. I would only observe that *Irenæus* does not affirm this of Himself. In the Apostles Days All were not *Prophets* ; and therefore this Gift might be granted to Others, and not to *Irenæus*. But what I mean principally to insist on here, is, that if *Irenæus* had affirmed this of Himself, it would not follow, that because He had sometimes *occasionally* been favoured with such Impulses, therefore He was inspired in every Thing that He preached or wrote. Does He ever in any Part of his Works pretend to Inspiration ? Or does He deliver his Expositions of the Scriptures as infallible Interpretations ? In his Preface He speaks quite another Language. He tells Us that He designs to expose the Errors of the Hereticks to the best of his Power, and that according to his moderate Talent He shall give Occasion to Others more fully to confute them. He excuses his Want of Art and Skill, and tells the Person that He addressed Himself to, that He doubts not but He will improve upon what He has observed, as being more able than

than Himself. And yet this is the Man, whom the Dr. would represent (and that on the Strength of a single Expression no way relating to Himself) as setting up for a Pope, and pretending to be an infallible Interpreter of Scripture.

But He adds, that “ besides the Passage of
 “ *Irenæus*, from which alone the Thing it-
 “ self may fairly be inferred, We learn from
 “ the express and direct Testimony of *Gre-*
 “ *gory*, called the Wonder-Worker, that the
 “ Gift of expounding the Holy Scriptures
 “ was actually claimed, and reckoned as one
 “ of the most esteemed and excellent Gifts
 “ of those primitive Times; and was poured
 “ out in the largest Measure, upon his Ma-
 “ ster *Origen*.” (P. 54.) But this Testi-
 mony does not come up to the Point, nor
 answer to his Account of it in several Particu-
 lars. It is not the *Claim* of a Person, who
 pretended Himself to be possessed of this En-
 dowment, but a Compliment from a Scholar
 in a Panegyric Oration on his Master at
 leaving Him. Neither do the Words, how-
 ever high, necessarily imply that He thought
 Him inspired; nor must We always lay the
 highest literal Sense on the Expressions in a
 Panegyric. He says, *Origen* “ has received
 “ this greatest Gift from God, with an
 “ abundant Share of it from Heaven, to be

“ the Interpreter of the Words of God to
 “ Men, as if God Himself were speaking,
 “ and to expound them to Men, that Men
 “ also might hear them.” (P. 46.) Now
 as *Gregory Thaumaturgus* certainly believed,
 that the Grace of God was necessary to assist
 Men in the Discovery of Truth, and parti-
 cularly in the Study of the Holy Scriptures,
 (however Dr. M. may ridicule that Doctrine)
 there is Nothing here which He might not
 strictly say, as believing that God had par-
 ticularly blessed his Endeavours, and en-
 lightned his Understanding with his Holy
 Spirit, without meaning that his Interpreta-
 tions of Scripture were immediately dictated
 to Him by Revelation. Some late Expositors
 have excelled this Way, and should I say of
 them, that God had blessed them with the
 greatest and best Talent, that of expounding
 his Holy Word, and had granted them his
 gracious Assistance to that Purpose, I should
 say no more than the Language of the Gos-
 pel would justify, and should not suspect that
 Any One would believe, that I thought them
 really inspired. Or if I was thought an En-
 thusiast, or was really so, and did believe that
 They were favoured with Revelations, yet
 since They did not make any such Pretensions
 Themselves, the most high-flown Expres-
 sions from an Admirer of them would be no
 Proof,

Proof, that the Gift of an inspired Interpretation was claimed in our Days.

It ought therefore principally to be added that *Origen* Himself not only never claims such a Gift, but on the contrary disclaims it in many Parts of his Commentaries, and other Works, particularly Lib. con. Cels. 7. P. 701. Ben. Ed. *

But Dr. M. proceeded to shew, that *Justin Martyr* in particular lays Claim to this Gift of expounding the Scriptures as indulged Him in an extraordinary Manner, by the special Grace of God; and in his Vindication He says, in a contemptuous Manner, that “ these more
“ learned Doctors insist that He has wholly
“ mistaken the Matter, thro’ his Ignorance
“ of the proper Sense of the Words, &c.” (P. 47.) I charged Him indeed with putting a wrong Sense on *Justin’s* Words, but whether through Ignorance, or not, I pretended not to say. But what must We charge Him with, when He professes not to know the proper Sense of these Expressions, *the ordinary Grace and the ordinary Assistance of the Holy*

* Εἰκὸς μὲν εἶναι λόγους πολλῶ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἡξίως σωωτέρους, τὲς δυναμένους ἀποδεικνύναι ψευδόμενον ἐν τέτοις τὸν Κέλσον, καὶ ἐνθάδε τὰς προφητείας. Πλὴν καὶ ἡμεῖς κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν ἡμῖν, πεποιήκαμεν, τὰ, ὥς φησι Κέλσος, πάροις, καὶ πάντῃ ἄδηλα, πρὸς λέξιν διηρησάμενοι ἐν τοῖς πραγματευθεῖσιν ἡμῶν εἰς τὸν Ἡσαΐαν, καὶ εἰς τὸν Ψεῦκηλ, καὶ εἰς τινὰς τῶν δώδεκα.

Ghost, and to have looked after it without receiving Satisfaction, in the Writings of his Opposers? He represents me in particular as writing with great *Perplexity* and *Confusion* on this Subject. He cites me as saying that “ the “ Word χάρις or Grace is never used to de- “ scribe a supernatural Gift, but known to “ mean that ordinary Co-operation of the “ Holy Spirit with our best Endeavours, “ which is common to all Believers;” and then He represents me as treating it in the next Words as having no Meaning at all, but as “ a common Way of speaking, which Pious “ Persons accustom themselves to, of ascribing “ every good Thing which They possess to “ the Grace of God :” But I added expressly what the Dr. thought fit to omit, that they accustomed themselves to this Way of speaking, *according to the plain Doctrine of Scripture*, and therefore I could not possibly treat it as a Way of speaking that had no Meaning at all, unless I meant to speak in that irreverent Manner, of the Holy Scripture. I spoke not of well-meaning, tho’ ill-instructed Christians, who might use a Word of Course without understanding it; but I spoke of “ all Persons of true Piety, as accustoming “ themselves to speak of every Kind and Degree of their Proficiency as owing to the “ Grace of God, *according to the plain Doc-* “ *trine*

“ *trine of Scripture?*” And is not this the plain Doctrine of Scripture? Are We not therein expressly told, that the Power both of discerning and practising our Duty is owing to the assisting Grace of God? Are We not therein reminded of a Truth, which We sorrowfully experience, that our Nature is corrupt, and unable by its own Strength to turn to God, and to do Works acceptable to Him? Are We not taught that the Reparation of this lost Strength, that the Possibility and the effectual Endeavour of pleasing our Maker, is owing to the Operation of his Holy Spirit within Us? Let us attend to some Passages of the Holy Writings, which prove this Point. *The Preparations of the Heart in Man*, says Solomon, *are from the Lord*, Prov. xvi. 1. *I will put my Spirit within You, and cause You to walk in my Statutes, and Ye shall keep my Judgments and do them*, says God Himself by the Prophet Ezekiel, xxxvi. 26. The Prayers in the *Psalms of David* are founded upon this Principle and expressed in this Manner. He applies continually for Divine Assistance to enable Him to discern the Truth, and to live according to it. In particular He says, *O Give me the Comfort of thine Help again and establish me with thy free Spirit*. St. Paul tells Us, that *We are not sufficient of Ourselves, to think any Thing as of Ourselves,*
but

but our Sufficiency is of God, 2 Cor. iii. 5. that We are strengthened with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man, Ephes. iii. 16. that We abound in Hope thro' the Power of the Holy Ghost, Rom. xv. 13. that thro' the Spirit of Wisdom the Eyes of our Understanding are enlightened, Ephes. i. 18. that the Spirit of God dwelleth in Us, Rom. viii. 11. that the Spirit helpeth our Infirmities, Rom. viii. 26. that We are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in Us, 1 Cor. iii. 6. that the Manifestation of the Spirit is given to every Man to profit withal, 1 Cor. xii. 7. that God hath sealed Us and given Us the Earnest of his Spirit in our Hearts, 2 Cor. i. 22. that according to his Mercy He saved Us by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, Tit. iii. 5. with many other Expressions to the same Purpose. St. Peter adds, that our Souls are purified in obeying the Truth thro' the Spirit, 1 Pet. i. 22. Neither is this mere Peterism and Paulism, as a late Writer was pleased to call such Proofs drawn from the Epistles, as if they were of less Authority than the Gospels, but it is the Doctrine likewise of our Blessed Saviour Himself. He tells Us, that without Him We can do Nothing, John xv. 5. that Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, He cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, John iii. 5. that He that believeth

believeth on Him, out of his Belly should flow Rivers of living Water; and this the Evangelist says, spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive, John vii. 38, 39. that if any Man love Him and keep his Words, his Father would love Him, and They would come unto Him and make their Abode with Him, John xiv. 23. and how this Divine Residence and Abode was to be understood is explained, v. 17. The Spirit of Truth, He dwelleth with You and shall be in You: And finally He assures us, that God will not fail to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, Luke xi. 13.

And as We have Scriptural Authority for the Substance of this Doctrine, that the Spirit of God is assisting to Us in every good Thought, and Word, and Work, so We have the same Authority for the Term by which it is expressed. We know that *χάρις* in its original Meaning signifies no more than any Grace or Favour in general, but We find it applied in the Sacred Writings to signify particularly that Assistance granted by the Spirit to supply the Defects and correct the Faults of our corrupt Nature, and to enable Us still to discharge all that is required of Us. When *St. Paul* lay under some particular *Temptation*, which He stiles *the Messenger of Satan*, and from which He thrice prayed to be delivered,

livered, The Answer was, that instead of being delivered from it, He should be supported under it †; *My Grace is sufficient for thee, for my Strength is made perfect in Weakness*, 2 Cor. xii. 9. And to omit many other Instances, the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, where He is speaking of the Aid of Infirmities, uses this very Expression, *Let Us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that We may obtain Mercy and find Grace to help in Time of Need*, Heb. iv. 16.

Dr. M. says “ He knows these Terms, of
 “ the *ordinary Grace* and the *ordinary Assistance*
 “ of the *Holy Ghost*, are frequently used among
 “ Christians, but chiefly by that Sort, who
 “ know not what they mean, or rather mean
 “ nothing at all by them.” But since They
 only use herein the Language of the Sacred Writings, and profess to mean hereby the same Thing which is so often repeated therein, namely, the Help given by the Holy Spirit to our natural Infirmities, They cannot be liable to the Charge here brought against them, without Consequences which will shock every serious Christian.---Dr. M. goes on to represent me as contradicting Myself for speaking of this ordinary Grace as consistent with the Use of a Man’s own Reason, and yet allowing that as it is a Power added to

* Ἀγνή σοι ἡ χάρις μὲν, &c.

our Nature, it may in some Sense be called supernatural. As not the *Truth* but the *Consistency* of this Doctrine is here made the Question, it may be sufficient to refer to the tenth Article of our Church, wherein We are thus instructed. “ The Condition of Man after
 “ the Fall of *Adam* is such, that He cannot
 “ turn and prepare Himself by his own natural Strength and good Works to Faith
 “ and Calling upon God. Wherefore We
 “ have no Power to do good Works pleasant
 “ and acceptable to God without the Grace
 “ of God by Christ preventing Us, that We
 “ have a good Will, and working with Us
 “ when We have that good Will.” I refer not to this at present as a decisive Authority, tho’ methinks it should have some Weight with All who have subscribed to the Truth of it; but to shew that Ignorance and Nonsense are not chargeable on those pious Christians, who use this Style, and that there is no Contradiction in the Manner in which I had expressed it. For the Compilers of this Article have not told Us, that We are merely passive in the Work of our Conversion, or that the Grace of God takes away the Use of our own Reason, or the Exercise of our own Choice. They teach Us rather that it has restored these to Us, and that thro’ the preventing and assisting Grace of God, We now
 have

have it in our Power to know and obey our Maker as effectually for his Acceptance as if We had never lost that Capacity. Whether this Power of returning to our Duty was the Privilege of Nature, or of the assisting Influence of the Divine Spirit, added since the Corruption of our Nature, We could not perhaps by our own Reason have determined; but when the Scripture has determined this Point for Us, and has assured Us that it is owing to the latter, We must not presume to be Wiser than our Maker, and insist that it is the former, that is, that it is our own original unforfeited Gift. As being then an additional Strength communicated to Us beyond what was left to Us after the Fall of our first Parent, it may in some Sense be called *supernatural*, but as the Method of communicating it is such as We do not outwardly distinguish from the Workings of our Nature, and experience only by the Happy Effects of it, and is offered to all; it is therefore rightly termed the *ordinary Grace* of God, and distinguished from every Thing which is visibly *supernatural* and *miraculous*. This prevents a Possibility of that Confusion and different Use, which Dr. M. supposes may be made of this Principle in Theological Disputes; where He has so ridiculed the great Doctrine of our *Sanctification* by the Blessed Spirit, as must,

I should hope, open the Eyes of all his well-disposed Advocates. I must do Mr. *Toll* the Justice to observe, that He has used this Christian Style and Way of speaking, which Dr. *M.* represents as “used chiefly by those, “who know not what They mean, or rather mean Nothing at all by them.” Nay He has gone farther, and spoken expressly of the *extraordinary Aids of God's Holy Spirit*. (P. 12.) even where He mentioned them in Contradistinction to any Thing supernatural or miraculous, and meant no other than a great Degree of Divine Assistance concurring with rational Conviction. This Way of speaking is scriptural and just, whatever Offence it may give to Gainfayers; and since there is this fundamental Difference between Dr. *M.* and his Defender, it may be of some Use to admonish the latter what Cause He is engaged in, that He may not contribute to serve an Interest which is very far from his Intention.

Dr. *M.* proceeds to review the Passages, from whence He had inferred that *Justin Martyr* claimed the supernatural Gift of expounding the Scriptures. And here I stand charged with two Blunders in giving a wrong Sense and a wrong Tense to the Verb *παγαλλῶ*. But it is not pretended, that Either of them does any way affect or alter the Force

Force of the Argument, and therefore it is very little material either Way to insist on or to defend them. However both Points are, I think, sufficiently defensible, if it was worth while to dwell much upon it. The Word παρακαλῶ is often used in the Sense of *praying* both by Sacred and Prophane Writers, as the first Lexicon that is consulted, may convince Us. And it is principally so used in the New Testament, which seems most to the present Purpose. Thus Mark i. 40. Καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτὸν λεπρὸς παρακαλῶν αὐτὸν, καὶ γονυπετῶν αὐτὸν, καὶ λέγων αὐτῷ· Ὅτι ἔαν θέλης, δύνασαι με καθαρίσαι. Again Mark vii. 32. Καὶ φέρεσιν αὐτῷ κωφὸν μὲν γινάσκον, καὶ παρακαλῶσιν αὐτὸν ἵνα ἐπιθῇ αὐτῷ τὴν χεῖρα. But lest these Instances of Praying to Christ should not be admitted as a Proof of praying to God, We may add that in other Passages the same Verb is used of Petitions unquestionably offered to our Maker. Our Saviour Himself speaking of making Application to his Father, thus expresses it. Ἡ δοκεῖς ὅτι εἰ δύναμαι ἄξιτι παρακαλέσαι τὸν πατέρα μου, Mat. xxvi. 53. and again St. Paul, ὑπὲρ τέττε τρεῖς τὸν Κύριον παρεκάλεσα, 2 Cor. xii. 8. Dr. M. indeed asserts that “ it is a Verb, which implies no Sort of Reference to Prayer, or any
 “ Act or Office, which can be addressed to
 “ God, but to Man only in the Sense of exhorting,

“horting, admonishing and entreating.” (P. 51.) The Authority of the Sacred Writings will, I trust, be sufficient to refute this Assertion. Nor is the Answer to the other Objection, with Respect to the Tense more difficult. The second future* of this Verb is the very same with the present, *παραιναλω*--- and therefore may in Strictness of Grammar be construed---*I will pray*---Should not a Man have remembered his Grammar and consulted his Lexicon, before He charged Others with not having the least Tincture of *Greek*? And would it not have been proper too for a Christian Divine to have looked into the Greek Testament on such an Occasion? However This is not material to the Point in Hand. In either Tense and either Translation of the Word the Argument will hold strongly to the Purpose to which it was urged. *Justin* could have no Reason to *pray* that All might, and still less, I think to *exhort* All to be Partakers of a miraculous and extraordinary Gift, especially conferred on himself.

Dr. *M.* however says that “He shall once more affirm, that this Passage contains an express Claim of an extraordinary Gift; and that the Context also, from which his Opposers labour to draw a contrary Sense, confirms his.” (P. 50.) The Objection

* And so is the First in the *Attick* Dialect.

raised against *his* Interpretation, was, that *Justin* could not be supposed to pray or exhort them to be inspired, if He spoke of his own Inspiration, No, says Dr. *M.* now, He did not desire that They might have the same Gift which He had, but that They might make a good Use of that extraordinary Talent, which He had of interpreting the Scriptures by attending to his Interpretations, and embracing that true Sense of them which he was now qualified to teach them. The Reason assigned for this new Construction and entire Alteration of the Martyr's Sentence and Meaning, is, that " He could not on
 " any other Account be apprehensive of any
 " Punishment from God at the last Day,
 " but for the Neglect of imparting and communicating to Others the Benefit of that
 " extraordinary Gift, &c." (P. 52.) Certainly He would be answerable for the Neglect of his Gift, whatever it was, whether attainable by the common Grace offered to All, or the supernatural Assistance afforded only to some, and He must think it his Duty to enforce earnestly on all that Knowledge of the Scriptures which was necessary to Salvation, tho' He did not attain to it Himself by particular Inspiration. This Manner of Conclusion was very proper to shew them his Sense of the *Importance* of coming to a right
 Under-

Understanding of the Sacred Writings, and of the Duty which He lay under of contributing to it to the best of his Power; but has no Relation to any miraculous Method of interpreting it. He goes upon the Supposition that the Grace of understanding the Scriptures was offered to All, and therefore exhorts all to be Partakers of it; whereas if He had spoken only of his particular Expositions to be received by those who composed his Audience, his Expressions had certainly been more confined. Neither would He in this Manner have spoken of the *Cause*, and have specified the *Grace* to which He attributed his own Understanding of the Scriptures, and exhorted All to be Partakers of *that Grace*; but He would certainly have said what He meant; He would have specified the *Effect*, and insisted on their receiving those Expositions, which He was inspired to deliver. Whereas his Words are clear and express, that He exhorted All to partake of the Grace which He had partaken of; which was no other than that of interpreting the Prophecies of the Old Testament by the Revelation offered to all the World by Christ and his Apostles in the New. He was not speaking to *Christian* Brethren, who might perhaps have owned his Authority, but He was holding a Controversy with *Jewish* Adversaries, who

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could

could not be supposed to pay any Regard to his Pretence to Inspiration, if That had been his Meaning. He addresses Himself very properly to them upon their own Principles, reasons with them out of the Scriptures which They acknowledged, and professes to owe his own Proficiency herein to the *Grace of God*, by which Title the Gospel itself is sometimes distinguished in the New Testament. He exhorts all the *Jews* to be guided by the same Light, and to embrace the same Grace, which in other Words was exhorting them to turn Christians. And as this Exhortation was founded on Argument, on a View of many Types and Prophecies which the *Jews* admitted, and which He shews to be both explained and fulfilled in the History of our Saviour's Actions and Doctrines, in this Light it was rational and pertinent, and might be hoped to have some good Effect. Whereas had He solicited them to receive his particular Expositions as inspired, when They did not so much as acknowledge the general Faith, which He professed, This had been absurd and inconsistent, and his Proposal could expect no other Reception than that of Contempt and Ridicule.

There are two other Passages of *Justin Martyr*, which He had before produced, to
 prove

prove this Claim to Inspiration in his Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; which were both particularly shewn by the Context to mean no such Thing, but to refer to the general Doctrines of the Gospel made known to Us by the gracious Revelation of Christ: Dr. *M.* in his Vindication attempts only to obviate the Objection from the Use of the *Plural* Number in those Passages, from whence it was inferred, that *Justin* was not speaking of any Gift peculiar to Himself, but of some Privilege common to all the Professors of Christianity. Dr. *M.*'s first Remark is, that " They might " have observed, that One of these same " Testimonies begins with a Plural Verb, " which yet cannot admit any other Interpretation than of the Singular Number, as being addressed only to the single " Person of *Trypho*." (P. 53.) This again is a Mistake in Fact, and would have been styled great Ignorance, or Negligence, or by some harsher Name, had it occurred in the Performance of an Adversary; The Passage referred to is the last of Those which were cited by Dr. *M.* on this Occasion, and which begins thus, Ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἀνὴρ ἡμᾶς ποτε, &c. *Can ye ever think*, &c. Now this the Dr. says, was addressed to the single Person of *Trypho*, whereas Nothing can be more clear and ex-

press, than that this was addressed to Him and his Company. He had told *Trypho* in the Words immediately preceding, that “ *He had endeavoured to represent those Things with as much Brevity and Conciseness, as the Case would bear for the Sake of Those who had attended Him that Day.* To which *Trypho* returns, that *He had done well, yet He would have him understand that should He repeat them again more at large, it would be a Pleasure to Him and Those that were with Him, to hear them.* To which *Justin* replies in the Passage referred to, but beginning it expressly with an Address to them All. *Ὅμοῦτε ἅν ἡμᾶς ποτε, ὦ ἄνδρες, &c.* Dr. *M*’s next Remark is, that “ this indeed is a common Custom with all “ Writers to Use the Plural Number *We* “ and *Us*, when they expect to be understood as speaking only of themselves;” and he is pleased to exemplify his Remark in some Quotations from my Answer to Him. And here He diverts Himself with some pretty intelligible Hints, as if He thought me not the Author of my own Letter, and now calls that the *true Synodical Stile*, which He had just before told Us was a common and customary Way of Speaking. The Insinuation perhaps had not deserved Notice, had not the Case been circumstanced as it is; but I must have been guilty of gross Prevarication

varication, and a wilful Lye, had I published the Collection of Others in that Manner, with that Account which I gave of it in the Preface. The Truth was, as it was there represented; It was a private Letter, communicated to No One till it was finished, and was altered only in a single Sentence after it was communicated. This Alteration came from a Person whose Approbation of it much induced me to make it publick, whose Name it would be an Honour to me to mention; and who is since taken to the Reward of his exemplary Life and Labours. But neither is the Remark itself strictly true, as Dr. *M.* has stated it, that it is a common Custom with Writers to use the Plural Number, when they expect to be understood as speaking only of themselves. They certainly mean in such Cases to express what They conceive to be the Sentiments of those who concur with them in the general Opinion, and do not use the *regal* or *synodical* Stile, to express the Importance of their own Persons, but in Expectation of being understood to explain the Notion or Principle of those, who avow the same Cause. Thus when his *Defender* said, " Let it be understood that *We* dispute the Facts." (P. 38.) I do not imagine that He intended to signify merely his

own Opinion, nor do I infer from hence that He had Dr. *M.* or any other Coadjutor at his Elbow; but I suppose that He meant by this Kind of Expression to fix the Foundation on, which, as He apprehended, the Rest of Dr. *M.*'s Advocates, as well as Himself, intended to maintain the Argument. Such Phrases from private Persons are, I think, always so understood; nor can the Argument from the Use of the Plural Number be so evaded. Tho' the Writer or Speaker be Single, He is supposed in such Cases to speak of more than Himself, and would talk in a new and unintelligible Stile, if He did not.

Dr. *M.* seems sensible of this, and therefore after labouring the Point in vain, He determines that " it is Nothing to the Purpose, whether *Justin* speaks here only of Himself, or of a Number of Christians: " For if He affirms either of Himself or of All, that They were inspired by God with the right Interpretation of his Scriptures, that is the whole which He contends for." (P. 54.) He had before represented the *Martyr* as challenging this as his peculiar Privilege, as granted by the special Grace of God to Himself; but when it was shewn that He spoke of some Grace and Favour common to all Christians, now the Answer is, that it is the

the same Thing if He asserted that They were all inspired. But this very Circumstance would have been a Proof, that He could not speak of Inspiration, if the Expression had been doubtful; and much more when the Term itself is that which signifies common and ordinary Grace, this of the *Universality* of the Distribution of it is a Confirmation of that Sense of it. It was not credible that All Christians were inspired in the Interpretation of the Old Testament, and therefore when He speaks in the Plural Number of Himself and the Whole Body of Believers without Limitation, as coming by *Grace* to understand the Scriptures, it is very plain that He meant of that general Light, which the Belief of Christianity threw upon the former Writings both Historical and Prophe-tical.

Dr. M. however “ thinks that it will appear unquestionably to every Man unprejudiced, who considers the joint Force of the three Testimonies which He has produced in Proof of it, that *Justin* spoke of Christians being inspired by God with the right Interpretation of the Scriptures.” (P. 54.) As this is entirely an unsupported Opinion, not founded on a Review of those Testimonies themselves, nor on any Answer given to the plain Expositions of them which
were

were before offered, it can be of no Weight with any who do not pay implicit Regard to Dr. *M*'s Authority and Assertions ; and I shall take the Liberty to suppose the contrary, that all unprejudiced Persons will see that in those Passages He did not, and could not speak of particular Inspiration. Dr. *M*, however adds, that “ *Justin* is not in these
 “ Testimonies talking of any common or
 “ ordinary Points of the Scriptures, but of
 “ the most abstruse and recondite Passages
 “ of the Old Testament, in which, as in
 “ a Veil, the chief Evidences of the *Messiah*
 “ were supposed to have been wrapped up.” (P. 54, 55.) This, as far as it is true, is not of the least Service to the Dr's Interpretation. For *Justin* does not undertake to explain a particular dark Passage or two by immediate Inspiration, but He is shewing argumentatively, that the whole Tenour of the *Jewish* Dispensation was predictive of the Evangelical. He illustrates many Passages by their Completion under the Gospel, and shews how those Revelations, which *God at sundry Times, and in diverse Manners had made in Times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets*, were preparatory to that clearer Revelation, which at length He had made *unto all Men by his Son*. In this View He refers to some Predictions which before
 were

were unintelligible, and some Institutions which were unaccountable, and points to their real Meaning and Use as introductory to the great Scheme of our Redemption by Christ. And when He has done this, and given a better Account of the *Jewish* Writings and Ceremonies, than They could do Themselves, He goes on very properly to improve this into an Argument of the Truth of that Revelation which He professed. He appeals to the *Jews* with whom He was conversing, whether in their own Judgment these Dispensations could have born such an exact Analogy and Relation to each Other, if Both had not had the same Divine Author. And here I shall use Dr. *M*'s own Translation, only retaining the *Plural* Number, as it is in the Original, which will shew that *Justin* spoke as a Member of the Church; as One of the whole Society of Christians. *Do Ye think, that We could ever have been able to understand these Things from the Scriptures, if by the Will of their Author, We had not received the Grace to understand them.* He plainly infers that this rational Interpretation of the Old Testament (with which the *Jews* professed themselves pleased, tho' They did not yet own themselves convinced) which Christians by their farther Light were enabled to offer, was a Proof that the same
Holy

Holy Spirit, which dictated the Writings of the Old Testament, had likewise inspired the Authors of the New. The Explanation of the One by the Other, was so easy and natural, and the View and Design of the Whole Scheme in Both so consistent and important, that Each was illustrated and confirmed by Each, and the Author of the Former might from hence be concluded to be the Instructor of the latter. The Inference was strong and conclusive, and particularly applicable to the *Jews*, but has no Relation to, or Connection with the supposed Claim of Inspiration in the particular Person then speaking; but depends on the Knowledge which Every Christian had, or might have from the Revelation of the Gospel. There is no doubtful Term used which might give Occasion to any such Mistake about a supernatural Gift of expounding the Scriptures, nor is there any Thing in the Context which can express or imply it; but there are several Circumstances which apparently exclude it.

Dr. *M*'s last Refuge on this Head is such again as He would have derided in an Opposer. Some learned Men, it seems, amongst the Papists have so understood it, and interpreted this Passage of *Justin*'s supernatural Talent in interpreting the Scriptures. But I thought Dr. *M*. had waved the Point of
 Authority

Authority in the present Question, and had referred the Decision of it to our own Judgments, and to the Reason of the Thing. This was because He well knew that the Weight of Authority would cast the Scale against Him; yet still when it seemed to favour his Purpose, He could condescend to call in the Testimony of Members of the *Romish* Communion, whose Superstitions and received Opinions, in Spite of all their Learning, led them into many such Errors. But All, as far as I can perceive, are now for a *Free Inquiry*, as well as Dr. M. and will not have their Judgment precluded by the Sentence of two Popish Writers. The same Reasons, which prevail against Dr. M's Interpretation, are of as much Force against *theirs*, and tho' They and He intended to make a very different Use of their Opinion in this Point, yet We need not scruple to pronounce them all equally mistaken in it.

The next Miracle brought under Review in the *Vindication*, is that of *raising the Dead*. Dr. M. quotes me as saying that on this Article *there is great Stress to be laid*, and consents that the Issue of the Whole may rest upon it. But whatever my Opinion might be of the Importance or Evidence of this Article, I did not express it in this Place. I had repeated his Quotation from *Irenæus*, that
 “ the

“ the Miracle of raising the Dead was frequently performed *on necessary Occasions.*” These last Words I distinguished by putting them in *Italicks*, and went on to observe that there was great Stress to be laid on them. By the Error of the Printer indeed it is, “ there is great Stress to be laid on *this Cause,*” but the Impropriety of that Word in that Place, and the Connection of the following Sentences might easily have shewn that the true Copy was, *on this Clause.* For I argued from hence, that Dr. M’s Account of the great Frequency of this Miracle in every Parish, &c. must be a Misrepresentation; that as *Irenæus* here limited it to *necessary Occasions*, the Frequency spoken of could only be *comparative*, &c. The Stress that I laid on *this Clause* was so apparent that I can scarce think it could be mistaken without Wilfulness. What was probably meant by the Limitation of this Miracle to *necessary Occasions*, I have already endeavoured to shew, and Dr. M. has offered Nothing new on it in this Place *.

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* Dr. M. had in his Free Inquiry put a false Construction on *Irenæus’s* Words. He had interpreted the Words — τῆς κατὰ τόπον ἐκκλησίας πράξης, — every Parish or Place where there was a Christian Church; and here in his Vindication he makes another Addition to his Author, and makes him say this Miracle was frequently performed in those Days, tho’ *Irenæus* neither limits
this

The other Part of his Objection was,
 “ that so wonderful a Fact, if it had been
 “ frequent, must have made great Noise in
 “ the World, and been celebrated by all
 “ Writers.” To which it was replied by all
 his Answerers, that it could not be expected
 that *Heathen* Historians should record such
 Facts as made against themselves, and would

this Frequency to his own Days, nor affirms this Miracle to have been wrought in every Place or Parish. But we are told, that “ as his Words limit it to no particular Place, so they necessarily “ imply it to have been common alike to all Places, wherever “ there was a proper Occasion, &c.” (P. 51.) Very true, wherever there was a proper Occasion. But did such Occasions happen in every Parish? He Himself, a few Pages after, argues that there never could be any such Occasion: He must give Us Leave to say that these necessary Occasions could not occur very frequently; and therefore We insist that the Frequency here spoken of could be only comparative. Irenæus does indeed use the Word πολλάκις, frequently; but then every Body knows that such Expressions often admit of some Latitude, and the Limitations here added oblige us so to understand it here. Such a Miracle could not often be necessary, nor could it often be judged proper for the whole Church in any Place to assemble to make such a Petition. It is besides observable that in both the Places of Irenæus, where this Miracle is mentioned, the very Manner of Expression seems to denote it to have been extraordinary and uncommon. Other Miracles are spoken of in the present Tense, and said to be then common and abounding in the Church. This is spoken of separately and distinctly without any Limitation to the present Time; as much as to say, that, as other Miracles were then common, so even of this there had been Instances not a few. The Whole then, which can be concluded from this Passage in Irenæus, is, that since the Apostle’s Days there had been several Instances of this Miracle; but yet not so many as to force the Assent of all obstinate and prejudiced Persons, or to oblige all Historians to record them.

involve

involve them in Self-Condernnation for not turning Christians. Dr. *M.* thinks it an Answer to this Observation, to give a great Encomium of the Heathen World at that Time, to insist on their laudable Curiosity, their Love of Truth, their Desire of Knowledge, their Integrity in acknowledging their Conviction. He represents it as Nonsense and Absurdity to suppose that They would not attend to such Sort of Evidence, or that They would stifle the Conviction that it wrought in them. But this favourable Account of the Philosophers is with Respect to the greater Part of them, a Misrepresentation, and no other than the Contrivance of an Expedient to clear Himself of a present Difficulty, to use his own Words. I have already had Occasion to speak to this Question in Answer to Mr. *Toll*, and shall only here repeat, that it is no Absurdity to suppose that Unbelievers do and will act absurdly and wickedly. The Testimony however of the Compilers of the *Apostolick Constitutions*, whoever they were, may be thought of more Weight in this Case, as they speak of the Failure of Conviction even in the Exercise of miraculous Powers, and endeavour to guard against any Surprise on such an Observation by referring to former like Instances, wherein a corrupt Heart had blinded the Spectators against the Force

Force of the most apparent Miracles. “ For
 “ all Wicked Men are not moved by Mira-
 “ cles;—for neither did the *Egyptians* be-
 “ lieve in God, when *Moses* did so many
 “ Signs and Wonders; neither did the Mul-
 “ titude of the *Jews* believe in *Christ* who
 “ was like *Moses*, when he cured all Manner
 “ of Disease and Infirmary among them:
 “ So neither do supernatural Signs prove per-
 “ swasive to All, but to Those only who judge
 “ fairly and candidly *.” I conclude there-
 fore, in direct Opposition to Dr. M. that the
 Reader will not think it strange, that Men
 who know any thing of Human Nature, or
 the History of Past Ages, can reason in this
 Manner, or imagine that an Heathen, tho’
 He had seen the Fact performed before his
 Eyes, could resolve to stifle the Impression;
 and persist to deny the Reality of it. Those,
 who believe the Bible, must know there have
 been many such Instances, many Examples
 of those who have withstood the Evidence of
 Miracles; and whatever Causes might occa-
 sion this Effect in them, may well be sup-

* ἐδὲ γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἀσεβεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν θαυμάτων ἐντρέ-
 πονται — ἔτε γὰρ οἱ Ἀιγύπτιοι ἐπίσευσαν τῷ θεῷ, Μωϋ-
 σῆως τοσαῦτα σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πεποικνύσθαι· ἔτε τὰ
 πλήθη τῶν Ἰσραήλων τῷ ὡς Μωϋσεῖ χριστῷ, πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ
 πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ἐν αὐτοῖς θεραπεύσαντι· ἔτως ἔ πάντας
 δυσωπεῖ τὰ σημεῖα, ἀλλὰ μόνος τὸς εὐγνώμονας· Apoll:
 Conf: Lib. VIII. C. 1.

posed to have wrought the same in others. *St. Paul*, at a Time, when Miracles are allowed to have subsisted in the Church, observes that *not many Wise Men after the Flesh were called*, and yet they had the same Curiosity, and Love of Truth, and Desire of Knowledge in the Apostolical Age, as in the Centuries immediately succeeding. Whatever therefore may be offered to account for the Want of Success in their Conversion, when miraculous Evidence was unquestionably offered, will be of equal Weight in the Case now under View.

But suppose the greater Part of the Heathens had all these good Qualities ascribed to them; why then they must have been convinced by these supernatural Facts wrought in their Presence, and *Dr. M.* thinks it absurd to suppose the contrary. On this Supposition then They became Christians, and this is another Reason, why no Account of these Miracles is to be expected from *Heathen* Historians. Those who considered them with Attention and Candor, are supposed to have been wrought on by them, and then their Testimony falls under that of *Believers*; and Those who would not listen to them, or who rejected them, under the Notion of Magick, or Legerdemain, or any other Evasion, could not be expected to record to Posterity what they thought

thought not worth their own Notice. The Answer therefore to Dr. M's. Objection remains in its full Force on every Supposition: Those who acknowledged the Reality of these Miracles, must, if they were consistent, acknowledge the Truth of the Cause in the professed Defence of which they were wrought: There were Those who did so, and of Course became Apologists for the Christian Religion, insisting on the Continuance of these miraculous Powers amongst them. *Justin Martyr*, for Instance, was a Person of this Character, a Philosopher, distinguished by great Curiosity, Love of Truth, Desire of Knowledge, and Integrity in owning Conviction. In these Circumstances he became a Convert, acknowledged the Reality of Christian Miracles, and has recorded to Posterity the Claim that was made to them in his own Time. Such Persons might be expected to mention them, and have mentioned them; and are in every respect unexceptionable Witnesses: But an *Heathen* Historian, who, thro' Inattention, or any other Cause, did not believe these Miracles, must have judged ill indeed to have stuffed his History with supposed Legends, of which He did not believe a Syllable Himself. Or suppose, which perhaps was no uncommon Case, that an inquisitive Heathen was *doubtful* upon the

whole, unable to withstand the Evidence of the Reality of those Miracles, yet equally at a Loss to reconcile the Belief of them with some preconceived Notions, or to account for some Doctrines with which they were immediately connected; in such State of Scepticism, *Silence* might be the most reasonable and prudential Method, and might equally preserve him from the Charge of Inconsistency by Believers, and from Censure or Discountenance by Heathen Magistrates. This may probably be conjectured to have been the Case of *Josephus* with Respect to the Miracles of Christ and his Apostles. It may be said, it has been said, that if those wonderful Facts had been so frequent in *Jerusalem*, as they are represented to have been by the Evangelists, they must have made so great a Noise in the World, that the famous Jewish Historian could not have omitted to have mentioned them; or however must have insisted more on them, if it should be allowed that He has mentioned them at all. Now it seems very likely that He might be in some Kind of *Suspence* about them, and might be apprehensive of very different Consequences to be drawn by Friends or Enemies from the Report which he should make of them; whereas He should neither speak against his own Conscience, nor be involved in any Difficulty

ficulty in speaking according to it, if He omitted any Mention of them, and of Course any Judgment about them. Whatever was the Cause of his Silence, it is not the less certain that those Miracles spoken of in the Gospel were really wrought, because of his Omission of them; nor is it any Objection to the Other Evidence, which may be offered for the Continuance of this Power in the Church of *raising the Dead*, that Heathens, who might not know it, or believe it, and who, as long as they continued Heathens, must be supposed to discountenance the Belief of it, did not contradict themselves to record it:

The same Observation will lead to an Answer to the other Objections which are offered on this Head. Dr. M's Remarks are different on this Point, just as a different Purpose was to be served. They are, as He has represented those of his Answerers to be, suited to the Case before Him, and are made exactly to tally with the Difficulty which was to be evaded. At first, "One
 " End for which Miracles was granted, was
 " to enable the first Preachers to bear up
 " against the discouraging Shocks of popular
 " Rage and Persecution." Now this Use is entirely sunk in the *Vindication*, and " the
 " End of all Miracles is said to be to create

“ Faith and Conviction.” Now the Martyrs wanted none to confirm their Fortitude; They longed to hasten out of the World as fast as they could, and it would have been Misery and Mortification to them to have been thrown back into it again. This Representation is calculated to exclude *Irenæus’s* Account of *raising the Dead*, and to shew that there could be no *necessary Occasion* for working such a Miracle by the united Prayers of the Church: To which another of his own Remarks properly applied will yield a plain Answer. *Human Nature was the same in all Ages*, and the same Passions and Infirmities attended it. Men differed in their Constitution and in their Situation, and various Tempers and Circumstances worked various Effects in them. Some were as zealous for Martyrdom as He represents, but this was not universally the Case. Some were very properly jealous of their own Strength on such an Occasion, and with a very sincere Conviction felt all the Terrors of Nature on the Apprehension of a violent Death. Even of the former, those Zealots for Martyrdom, Some were influenced by very different Motives from Others; Some, worn out with Age and Infirmities, and believing a future Immortality, might naturally be desirous of a Release, as many good Christians are at all Times, who have

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no Thoughts of the Honour of Martyrdom. Others had their Thoughts so intensely fixed on Heaven and Heavenly Things, that They lost all Relish for this World, and in the Strength of their Contemplations wished for a speedy Translation to Glory. Others, thro' a natural Warmth of Temper, and the strong Impressions of an immediate Conviction, rushed without farther Thought upon their own Death, provoked their Persecutors unnecessarily, and without waiting for a Divine Call, offered themselves voluntarily to Capital Punishments. These latter were disapproved and censured by their wiser Brethren, who acted on rational Principles; who considered the farther Use, which Providence might intend them for in this Life, and regarded the Disposal of it as the sole Prerogative of God. Besides all these, There were many, who were influenced by Fears as well as by Reason and Religion; and Some, who were so far influenced by them, as to suffer this Passion to get the better of their Duty, and to be drawn thro' Terror to preserve their Lives at the Expence of their Consciences. Others did persevere but with great Difficulty, and perhaps had not persevered, if the Recollection of some eminent Deliverances had not supported their Spirits at that Critical Juncture. Thus were real Believers divided and distinguished

in the earliest Persecutions; thus have they been divided in all subsequent ones, and as *Human Nature is ever the same in all Ages*, thus, it may be expected, will be their various Behaviour on every like Occasion. We cannot therefore infer that extraordinary Interpositions were not of Use to *any* of the Believers Themselves, because they were not so to *all*; or that the Timid and Desponding might not need Encouragement, because the warm and Zealous rather needed Restraint. Such partial Accounts can answer no Purpose but that of Misrepresentation; whereas the Truth is, that very different Dispensations are profitable to different Tempers and Circumstances, and Providence in Wisdom and Mercy has granted such as may suitably affect every reasonable Mind.

It may readily be allowed, that “ a whole
 “ Congregation would hardly be induced to
 “ fast and pray that a departed Friend might
 “ be restored, merely to relieve the present
 “ Grief, or gratify the fond Affection of particular Persons or Families,” unless there was some farther and more important End to be served by the Interposition. As one Person or Family might be desirous of this as well as another, and as the Impropriety of thus continuing that Generation by constant Miracles, appears on the first Mention of it,
 therefore

therefore the forementioned Motive *alone* can never be thought a sufficient Inducement to a Congregation to attempt it. It must be presumed that there was some particular Importance in the *Person* so to be restored, or some occasional Importance in the *Season*, as a proper Confirmation of Believers, or Preparative to an approaching State of Persecution. Something of this Sort is plainly implied in that cautionary Clause, on which I observed great Stress is to be laid, that this Miracle was performed *on necessary Occasions*. As to the Injury which Dr. M. signifies would hereby be done to Those, who were just on the Point of entring into Happiness, and were hereby thrown back into a World of Misery, it is certain that the same Sense of Piety, which made them desirous of a Translation, would make them resigned to the Will of God in the Delay of it; and would enable them to determine, as St. Paul did in the *same Strait*; that tho' They had a *Desire to depart and to be with Christ, which* for themselves at present would be *far better*, yet knowing that it *would be more needful for the Church, for them to abide in the Flesh*; They would with Contentment and Confidence *abide and continue with their Brethren for their Furtherance and Joy of Faith*. They knew that the longer they continued in the World,

if

if They improved their Time, and did the more Good in it, the greater would be their Reward in the Conclusion; and even This might make them resign'd in such their unexpected Restoration to Life, on their own Account, besides the Opportunity hereby given of contributing farther to the Salvation of Others; an ardent Desire of which was then become, as it were, the natural Temper of Christians.

Dr. *M.* adds, that the Heathens being every where the Majority, “ a Christian could
 “ not die or be carried at least to his Grave,
 “ without being observed by some or other
 “ of his Heathen Neighbours, much less
 “ could He be called again into Life, without
 “ astonishing all those who had ever seen
 “ or known Him before, &c.” (P. 65.) But it is highly probable that where the Church thought fit to interpose in this solemn Manner, They did it before the Interment, and therefore if it was intended to be kept from the Knowledge of the Heathens, it was very easy to do so, and there is no Weight at least in this Consideration.

His last Observation on this Point, is, that as much as the Pretence to this Miracle is now disregarded, if it were fairly offered and really performed, it would invite and convince all Men, and therefore it would have had

had the same Effect upon the Heathens heretofore. I am not quite satisfied of the Truth either of the Assertion or of the Inference. Such a Claim clearly established would certainly satisfy all reasonable and impartial Men, but all Men are not, nor ever were, reasonable and impartial. Amidst the Variety of Mens Dispositions, Some would still think the Claim to be too incredible to deserve any Attention; Others, tho' they saw the Fact, would disallow the Miracle, thro' the Supposition of Confederacy, or some such Evasions; and Others who could not tell how to evade it, would still disown their Conviction; whilst candid and unprejudiced Minds only would perceive and confess the Truth. This always has been the Case, where Miracles have been offered, and therefore *Human Nature being ever the same in all Ages*, We may safely conclude, that this would be the Case again in the same Situation. For Instance, in this particular Article of *raising the Dead*, the Chief Priests, who knew that *Jesus* had raised *Lazarus*, instead of acknowledging this Evidence of his Divine Power and Authority, turned their Resentment as well against the Person on whom, as on Him by whom the Miracle was wrought, and *consulted that they might put Lazarus also to Death*, John xii. 10. He, it may be presumed, followed the Example of
his

his Benefactor, and declined giving them the Opportunity of accomplishing their Schemes, which Dr. M. who knew how much greater Impression Words will sometimes make than Arguments, was pleased in a parallel Case to call, *skulking perpetually, and hiding themselves among a few Friends.* (P. 65.) Again, these chief Priests, when they had received the Account of the Resurrection of *Jesus* Himself, from unquestionable Authority, yet instead of resolving to act now according to their Convictions, they resolved rather to stifle and evade them, and hired the Witnesses themselves to do the same. These are plain Proofs, that Men are not always governed and guided by the Force of Evidence, but have more Power over their own Faith and Conduct than they are here represented to have. Dr. M. may be said to *desert the Path of Nature and Experience* in supposing that All Men will attend and be perswaded, and own their Perswasion, because the Evidence is such, that They ought to do all this; and He as expressly contradicts the History of the Bible in arguing against the Truth of Miracles, because they did not convince All who saw, or might have seen them.

After all, Dr. M. was forced to aggravate and misrepresent the Reflection offered, before He could make Room for his own ready

ready Talent of Ridicule. I may reasonably demand what Representation I had given of this Matter, “ which should tend to persuade Men, that if the Heathens had been invited to see the Miracle performed in their Presence, they would have knocked the Man down, as soon as He began to rise, and smothered Him again in his Grave, before He was got out of it.” (P. 60, 61.) With what Truth or Justice could He charge these Doctors with saying on this Occasion, that the Production of a Person raised from the Dead, would have *exposed Him only to Persecution*, or, *to have been knocked on the Head upon the Spot?* (P. 72.) These last Words He has put in *Italicks* as the Words of the Doctors; but They are both injured in this Account. Dr. *Church* offered no Reflection of this Kind, and the Whole that I said was that the Recording Instances of Persons thus raised would (in *some* Cases probably, for I did not say, nor could be supposed to mean, *in all*) have been drawing down unnecessarily Persecution upon those particular Persons. In this I am sufficiently justified by the fore-mentioned Instance of *Lazarus*, which I had then in View, and a very slender Foundation does this afford for all this Torrent of Ridicule.

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The Argument on this Subject, as it stands between *Theophilus* and *Autolycus*, is next taken into Consideration. And here Dr. M. has thought fit again to indulge the abusive Strain, and to proceed in a Style, which I will not imitate. I had observed, that the plain Meaning of *Autolycus's* Demand was to desire that He might be an *Eye-Witness* to such an extraordinary Event, and that *Theophilus* answers clearly to this Sense of his Demand. I had translated the Words referred to in this Manner*. *Farther you deny the Resurrection of the Dead. For You say, shew me even one raised from the Dead, on the Sight of which I will believe.* Dr. M. says, they should be rendered thus: *But farther, You deny that the Dead are now raised; for You say, shew me but One, who has been raised from the Dead, and by seeing Him I will become a Believer.* Now on the Comparifon of these Translations an *English* Reader would certainly have imagined, that I had been guilty of a faulty Omission, and had left out some Word which was very material, and which being rendered *now*, or at *this Time*, would have been decisive on the first Question. But this is an Insertion of the Dr's own, which there

* Ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀρνεῖσθαι σε νεκροῦς ἐγείρεσθαι. Φησὶ γὰρ, Δείξον μοι καὶ ἓνα ἐγερθέντα ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἵνα ἰδὼν πιστεύσω.

is no Word in the Original to Answer. To justify the Insertion of it however, He observes that " Every School-Boy would readily tell us, that νεκρὸς ἐγείρεσθαι denotes an " Action of the present Time." Most certainly, but Those of more Knowledge should farther consider the Nature of the Thing spoken of, the customary Use of the Phrase, particularly by the same Writer, and the Manner in which it is introduced. Dr. M. thought proper to confirm his Sense of it from a Passage in the New Testament, *Mat. xi 5.* where the same Form of Expression is used by our Lord to betoken the Miracles of that Sort, which he was then working. I must beg Leave to add, that the same Form of Expression is likewise used by the same Divine Author, not concerning the miraculous Gift given at that Time, but concerning the future Resurrection of all Mankind. ὅτι δὲ ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροί, καὶ Μωσῆς ἐμήνυσεν ἐπὶ τῆς βράτῃ, ὡς λέγει Κύριον τὸν Θεὸν Ἀβραάμ, καὶ τὸν Θεὸν Ἰσαὰκ, καὶ τὸν Θεὸν Ἰακώβ. Θεὸς δὲ οὐκ ἔστι νεκρῶν, ἀλλὰ ζώντων, πάντες γὰρ αὐτῷ ζῶσιν. Now that the Dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the Bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the Dead, but of the Living, for All live unto Him, Luke xx. 37, 38. Here both the

Context

Context and the Nature of the Argument used shew unquestionably that he spoke of the future Resurrection of the whole Species, yet He uses the same Phrase that he did in the other Case, and has here that very Word, which as Dr. M. says, and every School knows, indicates a present Sense. Again, says the same divine Author. ὡςπερ ὁ Πατήρ ἐγείρει τὰς νεκρὰς, *John* v. 25. St. Paul follows his Master's Example. Τί ἀπίστον κρίνεται παρ' ὑμῶν εἰ ὁ Θεὸς νεκρὰς ἐγείρει, *Acts* xxvi. 8. and elsewhere within a few Verses He uses this present Tense three Times, tho' he is clearly and professedly treating of the future Resurrection at the End of the World; *1 Cor.* xv. 29, &c. The last of these Verses is the most remarkable, and therefore I will cite it at length. Ἀλλ' ἐρεῖ τις πῶς ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροί, καὶ ποίῳ σώματι ἔρχονται; *But some Man will say, How are the Dead raised, and with what Body do they come?* This could not be spoken of those, who were restored to the same mortal Condition in this Life, but of those who were to be raised again with glorified Bodies hereafter. The Apostle goes on in the same Style to speak of the great Difference which shall then pass on this mortal Part of Us, using still the present Tense, but most certainly intending to be understood in the future. Σπείρεται ἐν φθορᾷ, ἐγείρεται ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ,

ἀφθαρσία, &c. *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in Incorruption, &c.* v. 42, &c. It will be allowed, I suppose, that St. Paul was not speaking of what was then doing, but of the Alteration that there would be in this Part of our Composition at the Day of Judgment. Whether We can account for this Manner of speaking or not, it is plain that it was used on this particular Subject; and tho' a School-Boy may know the present Tense of a Verb, He may not know enough to assign the Reason why it was used, where it can have no other than a future Signification. Some particular Reasons might, I think, have been assigned for this Manner of speaking upon this very Article, if it had been peculiar to it; but it is so frequent upon many different Subjects, that there is no Necessity of justifying it by any distinguishing Considerations. It is common in the New Testament in many Instances to use the present for the future.—*ἄνθρωπον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν* occurs in this very Chapter, v. 32. (For farther Satisfaction see Glaffius Grammat. Sacr. Lib. III. Tract. III. Can. 47. §. 2.)

It is still farther to the Purpose, that *Theophilus* Himself, in the former Part of this very Book, uses the same Expression in the same Sense, and where it cannot possibly admit of any other. He tells *Autolycus*, He

will then understand these Things, when He shall come to experience them; when He shall have laid aside his mortal Body, and shall have put on Immortality*. *For God raises your Body immortal together with your Soul.*

Theophilus goes on in Words and Reasonings which cannot be misunderstood, and which confine his Meaning to the great Time and Scene of Retribution. Tho' He had used this Verb in the present Tense after the fore-mentioned Pattern, yet He uses others in the future, on Purpose as it were to ascertain his Meaning †. *And then, if You now believe in Him, being made immortal Yourself, You will see Him that is immortal, and then You will be sensible how impious was that which You have spoken against Him.* And then follows a Sentence which is quite decisive upon the Point in Question, and shews indisputably in what Sense He charged Him with denying the Resurrection. He uses here the very same Words as He does afterwards in the Passage which occasioned these Reflections. "Αλλὰ ἀπίστεις νεκρὸς ἐγείρεσθαι, ὅτε ἔσται, τότε πιστεύσεις θέλων καὶ

* *Ανεγείρει γὰρ σε τὴν σάρκα ἀθάνατον σὺν τῇ ψυχῇ ὁ Θεός.* • (Lib. I. P. 22. Edit. Oxon.)

† *Καὶ τότε ὅψις γενόμενος ἀθάνατος τὸν ἀθάνατον, εἰς τὴν πίστεισιν αὐτοῦ, καὶ τότε ἐπιγνώσῃ ὅτι ἀδίκως καταλά-
λεις αὐτόν.*

μὴ θέλω. *But You do not believe that the Dead are raised; when it shall be, then You shall believe, whether You will or no.* Here the Meaning certainly was not doubtful, but the Whole Passage relates very evidently to the Resurrection of Mankind to Judgment. After some few Pages He resumes the Subject, and returns to the Mention of *Autolycus's* Denial of this Article, repeating the same Expression. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀρνέσθαι σε νεκρὸς ἐγείρεται. *Farther, You deny that the Dead are raised.* Now if He meant here a Thing quite different from what He meant when he used the same Words before, could He have avoided altering or adding some Word which might have given a Hint of the Design? If instead of speaking of the general Resurrection, which it must be confessed He had spoken of in these very Terms in the preceding Part of the Discourse, He meant now to speak of the miraculous Power of raising the Dead as then continuing in the Church, would He not have specified the Distinction, and taken some Notice that He now referred not to the Doctrine of a Resurrection to Immortality with Respect to all Mankind, but of a Return from Death again to this Life, by Virtue of a supernatural Endowment? There is not a Word, nor a Hint to this Purpose throughout this whole Book, but there is very plain Evi-

dence from *Theophilus's* Answer, that whatever was the Method in which *Autolycus* required Satisfaction, yet the Design was to establish Him in the Belief of the general Resurrection, which at present He denied. For after *Theophilus* had reminded Him of the greater Incredibility of some Articles in the Pagan Theology, and referred Him to some of the Works of Nature and Providence, which might shew the Possibility and Probability of this Doctrine, He adds expressly in the Conclusion of this Paragraph *. *Now all these Things worketh the Wisdom of God in order to shew even by these that He has Power sufficient to effect the general Resurrection of all Men.* If *Theophilus* be supposed Himself to understand *Autolycus*, and to have written to the Purpose for his Satisfaction, This again will be decisive as to the Particular which He is here represented as denying; and Dr. M. will be found Himself to have quite reversed the Matter, as He phrases it, when He rejects with so much Scorn and Contempt, the Supposition, that the general Resurrection was the sole Point here referred to.

* Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα ἐνεργεῖ ἢ τῇ θεῷ σοφίᾳ, εἰς τὸ ἐπιδεί-
ξαι καὶ διὰ τούτων, ὅτι δυνατός ἐστιν ὁ Θεὸς ποιῆσαι τὴν κα-
θολικὴν ἀνάστασιν πάντων ἀνθρώπων.

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The Review of these Passages together in *Theophilus*, may clear another Point in Dispute. Dr. M. had asserted that *Autolycus* offered to turn Christian on seeing one Person raised from the Dead. I observed that this was more than the Original warranted Him to say; that *Autolycus* was speaking only of that one Point of the Resurrection, which at present He denied, but owned He would believe, if He could see an Instance of it. Dr. M. replies that “ the Words themselves are “ express, *ὅτι ἰδὼν πίστεύσω*,” which he has translated, *and by seeing Him I will become a Believer*, and is pleased to add that they “ cannot possibly be interpreted to any other “ Sense.” (P. 71.) This is a strong Assertion indeed, but is nothing more. To make Use of a Distinction, which He knew how to apply when it would serve a Turn, the Word *in its native and proper Sense*, means to *give Credit*, or *Assent*, and may be applied to Persons, or Doctrines, or Facts, according to the Occasion on which it is introduced. Dr. M. adds that “ We find the same Verb “ *πίστεύω*, continually applied in the New “ Testament, in the same Manner, to denote “ a Man’s becoming a Believer, not of this “ or that particular Point, but of the whole “ Faith of Christ.” There are many Instances in the New Testament, where this

Word is used in its native and proper Sense to signify the Assent given to the Article spoken of, not including the whole Faith of Christ, and sometimes not relating to any Part of it. As the Gospels treat chiefly of the History of Christ, and the Epistles of his Religion, of Course this Word, where it is introduced, does generally mean a Believer on his Person or Doctrine, and in the Passages referred to by Dr. M. the Context shews that it must be so understood; But the Force of the Observation now offered is, that it does not *necessarily* signify so, that its Sense must depend on its Connection, that Believers may be spoken of with Respect to other Points than the Religion of Jesus, and that they are so spoken of in the Use of this Verb or its Participle in several Parts of the New Testament. St. Paul applies it to the Belief of the Being and Providence of God, *Heb. xi. 6.* πιστεύσαι γὰρ δεῖ τὸν προσερχόμενον τῷ θεῷ, ὅτι ἐστὶ. St. Jude to the Acknowledgment of, and Obedience to the Dispensation of *Moses, v. 5.* ὅτι ὁ Κύριος λαὸν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου σῶσας το δεύτερον τὰς μὴ πιστεύσαντας ἀπώλεσεν. And St. James to the Apprehensions which the Devils themselves have of their Maker. *Jam. ii. 19.* καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια πιστεύουσι καὶ φρίσσει·

φρίσσει· The Word therefore is by no Means equivalent to that of *turning Christian*, and implies no more than the Belief and Acknowledgment of that Point, whatever it was, that is brought into Question. In this Sense it was evidently used in the fore-cited Passage of *Theophilus*, Ἀλλὰ ἀπίστεις νεκρὸς ἐγείρεσθαι, ὅτε ἔσται, τότε πιστεύουσιν θέλων καὶ μὴ θέλων. Here the Belief in the latter Part plainly relates to the same Point as the Disbelief in the former; and He did not mean that the Other would *turn Christian* at the Day of Judgment, but that He would then be fatally convinced of what he would not admit before, the Certainty of a general Resurrection.

Again, in the other principal Passage under View. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀρνεῖσθαι σε νεκρὸς ἐγείρεσθαι· φῆς γὰρ, δεῖξόν μοι καὶ ἓνα ἐγερθέντα ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἵνα ἰδὼν, πιστεύσω. Here what He would believe upon this Evidence was plainly that which He denied before, that is, that the Dead could be raised, but there is not any thing said or intimated, that he would extend his Faith beyond that single Article, and the Answer immediately made to his Proposal plainly implies that he would not. *Theophilus* replies, “What great Thing is it, if you do believe what you see yourself?”

Which could not have been applicable to Him if he had offered to turn Christian on the Sight of one such Miracle. This Remark was offered before on this Subject, but Dr. M. thought fit to leave it, amongst many others, unanswered.

The next Question is, in what Method *Autolycus* demanded Satisfaction. Dr. M. said in his Free Inquiry, that He “ challenged “ *Theophilus* to shew Him but one Person “ that had been raised from the Dead, on “ Condition of turning Christian Himself “ upon it.” I observed from the Character of *Autolycus*, and his Method of objecting, and the Answer given to Him, that this was not the Sense of his Demand; but that He certainly desired to be Eye-Witness to such an Event. — But before We go on to re-examine the Circumstances, I must obviate an Objection thrown in the Way as insuperable, from the Tense in which the Participle is used. Dr. M. says, Every School-Boy would readily tell us that ἐγερθέντα denotes an Action of the Time that is past, and He is pleased to add Himself, that “ it could not possibly “ mean any Thing else, in its proper and “ grammatical Sense, but a Person, who had “ *already been raised from the Dead.*” (P. 70.) But here the School-Boy might reply, and as readily tell the Dr. that he had mistaken

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ken the *Aorist* for the *Preterperfect* Tense, and the Authority would be very suitable to the Person arguing, and very pertinent to the Occasion, if he should appeal to Dr. *Busby* to decide this Question. Indefinita sunt Tempora incertæ Significationis, sumuntur enim pro Præteritis omnibus, interdum pro Præsenti & Futuro. (Busb. Gr. Gramm.) The very Name of this Tense contradicts the Dr's. peremptory Assertion. It is therefore called the *Aorist* or *Indefinite*, because 'tis thus used promiscuously. The Participle very commonly denotes an Action future with Regard to the present Time, but past with Regard to some subsequent Action. Thus *Luke* xi. 8. — ἐγερθεὶς δώσει αὐτῷ ὅσων ἠρήξει. — The Rising was future with Regard to the Entreaty aforementioned, but previous to the Giving. And thus it may be in the Words before Us — δεῖξον ἐγερθέντα. — the Resurrection might be future with Regard to *Autolycus's* Demand, tho' previous to the Shewing. There is not the least Weight therefore in this Grammatical Objection, so pompously urged, but the Words are capable at least of the Sense which I have put upon them.

I may go on to add that on Supposition, that the Demand really bore that Meaning, in which I have interpreted it, it was more properly

properly expressed in this Manner than it could have been in any other. *Autolycus* must otherwise have used a long Periphrasis, or have left some Part of his Meaning unexpressed. Had He said, Shew me One Rising from the Dead, He had not said all that He meant to demand. He certainly meant to see and converse with this Person again after He had been raised, as well as to be Witness to the Act itself of his Rising. If he knew any thing of the Belief of Christians, He knew that their Master had conversed 40 Days with his Disciples after his Resurrection, and He might well consider this as necessary to confirm the Reality of the other. Had a Person been raised for his Satisfaction, who had ascended immediately from the Grave to Heaven, and had appeared no more, this Fact would have admitted of many Evasions, which an After-Conversation would Exclude; and as the Demand came from *Autolycus* Himself, We may be sure that he would desire the Evidence so circumstanced as would be most satisfactory to Him; I make no Doubt therefore but He required to see this Person again *after* He was raised, as well as *when* he was raised, and this indeed I think appears from the Answer. And if both these Articles were included in his Demand, then, as the whole

Scene

Scene was future, when He required this Method of Satisfaction, and was to be past before He could receive Conviction from it, his Challenge might very well be so expressed, or at least might properly be so abridged by Him who repeated the Substance, and knew the Meaning of it, *φῆς γὰρ, δεῖξόν μοι καὶ ἕνα ἐγερθέντα, &c.*

That the Expression may admit of this Meaning, is all that has hitherto been argued; that it was really intended in this Sense, that *Autolycus* desired to see a Person raised in his Presence, appears, I think, from the Circumstances of the Case. If He only desired to see a Person that had formerly been raised, then He must have relied on the Testimony of *Theophilus*, or other Witnesses, concerning the main Point, that of the Miracle itself, that the Person now produced to Him, was really raised from the Dead sometime before. Had this been the Case, He might as well have given Credit to their general Claim of Miracles, for if He thought them Impostors, their bringing forth a Man to his View, and saying that That was He, who had formerly been raised, could by no Means add to the Evidence. The whole Weight of that must, in such an Instance, rest on the Credibility of the Witnesses, but it is plain from the whole Course of the Argument,

Argument, that *Autolycus* denied the Possibility of a Resurrection in itself, and declared that Nothing but plain Matter of Fact should convince Him of the contrary. He lays the whole Stress on the Necessity of Ocular Demonstration in the Case. ἵνα ἰδὼν, πιστεύσω. But how was this applicable, if He was only to see the Person, and be told that that was the same who sometime ago was restored to Life? In this Case He saw nothing of the Miracle, nor had any thing more than the Report of Others to ground his Belief of it upon. His Sight, which only He resolved to trust, was of no Weight at all on this Supposition, for They might as well deceive Him in the Identity of the Person, as in any other Circumstance of the Account. But the Answer given by *Theophilus* plainly implies, that He insisted on seeing the Miracle itself, and would allow no other Evidence as sufficient. For He replies, πρῶτον μὲν, τί μέγα, εἰ θαυμάσιος τὸ γεγονός πιστεύεις; He tells Him it was no Sort of Wonder, if He believed a Fact done before his Face. This could by no Means have been applicable to the Case of *Autolycus*, if He had desired no more than to see the Person, and would have believed the Account of his Resurrection upon Report; but it was a very proper Reproof to One, who insisted upon Ocular Demonstration.

tion for every Thing, and declared that He would believe no farther than He could see. This answers to the Interpretation which I have given of his Demand, and to no other, and evidently proves, that He required the Sight of the Miracle itself for his Conviction.

Dr. M. adds, “ that *Autolycus’s* Demand “ wholly relates to a Person, who *had been* “ *actually raised*, is proved beyond all Doubt, “ by *Theophilus’s* Answer to it, as it stands “ translated by Myself, *for if I should shew* “ *You one raised from the Dead, and still living,* “ *even this You would disbelieve:*” Here I suppose He thought to gain an Advantage by the Translation of *still living*, as if the Person had been raised heretofore, and was then living when *Theophilus* spoke; whereas We are to consider the whole Transaction, if it had been done at all, as subsequent to the Demand: *Theophilus* tells Him, that if He should comply with this Demand, if He should shew Him a Person actually raised, and not disappearing after his Resurrection, but still living amongst them, even this would fail of the supposed Effect, and would not prove convincing to *Autolycus*. Now this Answer, for ought I see, corresponds as well with my Interpretation of the Demand as with any other. For why was not this Reply

ply as proper, on Supposition that *Autolycus* desired to see the Person raised in his Presence, and, to prevent Deceit, to see Him again afterwards, as if He had only desired to see One that had been raised formerly? Every One that believes the History of the Bible, knows that there have been Persons who have resisted the Evidence of Miracles wrought in their own Presence, and *Theophilus* probably knew more such Instances, and had Reason enough from his Acquaintance with *Autolycus*, to judge that He was a Person of that Character, on whom even this Kind of Evidence would be lost. He says indeed, at first, that it would be no great Matter, if He should believe what He saw with his own Eyes; but He goes on to add, what Every Believer knows to be true, that even Ocular Demonstration is not irresistible, but that hardened Infidels might contrive to evade the Force of it. They might either distinguish away the Reality of the Miracle, or disown the Conviction that it wrought in them, as in some Instances before referred to. Now either of these might very properly be called *Unbelief*, and the One or the Other *Theophilus* foresaw, and ventured to foretell would be the Case with *Autolycus*, if He should give Him that very Evidence that He demanded.

The same appears still farther from the whole Discourse of *Theophilus*, from the Character in which *Autolycus* is there drawn, and the Nature of the Evidence which He is represented as demanding in other Instances. Dr. M. indeed, to serve a present Purpose, as He is apt to remark upon Others, has drawn a very fair and promising Character of *Autolycus*. He says, “ From his Familiarity
 “ and Friendship with this eminent Bishop,
 “ We may justly infer, that He was of a
 “ candid, reasonable and inquisitive Dispo-
 “ sition, a Contemner of the Idolatry and Su-
 “ perstition of the Publick Religion, and de-
 “ sirous to embrace a more rational Worship,
 “ if He could any where find it. In these
 “ Circumstances Christianity was proposed
 “ to Him, to which He seems to have been
 “ inclined, but the Miraculous Pretensions
 “ of the Christians appear to have shocked
 “ Him, and infused certain Scruples, which
 “ were first to be removed. He could not
 “ believe that They had the Power, of which
 “ They boasted, of *raising the Dead*; or that
 “ there were any Persons then living among
 “ them, who had been so raised: This was
 “ the Point, in which He required to be sa-
 “ tisfied; and if *Theophilus* would shew him
 “ an Instance of any such Person, so as to
 “ convince Him of the Reality of the Fact,
 “ He

“ He promised to turn Christian upon it.” (P. 71.) This is Dr. *M*’s favourable Representation of *Autolycus*, which is not only without any the least Foundation, but contrary in every Particular to the Account given of Him by *Theophilus*. This eminent Bishop represents Him as a bigotted Heathen, as One that worshipped the grossest Idols, but could go no farther than the Objects of his Senses, not even so far as to acknowledge an invifible God. He represents Him as ridiculing and abhorring the very Name of a Christian; as fupposing that Faith unworthy of any Consideration, as confining all his Belief to the Evidence of his Senses, and requiring that Evidence particularly in both the Articles of a fpiritual Creator, and of the Refurrection of the Human Species. The very Reverse of this Character Dr. *M*. has fupplied from his own Imagination, without Authority, and againft Reason, and describes Him as candid, reasonable, and inclining to Christianity, when his Correfpondent treats Him as furious, prejudiced, unreaſonable, averſe to the Evidence, the Doctrine, the very Title of this Religion.

Let us firſt obſerve what Proofs there are of his Inclination to Chriſtianity. *Theophilus* charges him with making the very Name a Jeſt, and converting it into a criminal Imputation.

tion. Ἐτι δὲ φῆς με, καὶ χριστιανὸν ὡς καλὸν, τὸννομα φορῶντά· (P. 2.) And again, Περὶ δὲ τῷ σὲ καταγελάει με, καλῶντα με χριστιανόν, ἢ κ' οἶδας ὃ λέγεις. (P. 33.) He next reproves Him as a direct Blasphemer, and tells Him that He shall hereafter, at the general Resurrection, be sensible of this his Prophaneness and Impiety. Τότε ἐπιγνώσῃ ὅτι ἀδίκως καταλάλησας αὐτῷ. (P. 22.) He represents this *candid and reasonable Inquirer* as demanding ocular Demonstration for the being of a God, as desiring to have the Deity exhibited to his View. δεῖξόν μοι τὸν Θεόν σε. (P. 5.) And He draws up the Answer so as to confine the Demand to this Sense. He bids Him open the Eyes of his Mind and the Ears of his Heart, for that as worldly Objects were discernible by the Bodily Eyes, so by mental ones only could the Vision of God be attained*. He describes him not as satisfied with this Answer, but as going on still to desire to have the *Form of God* described to Him†. *Theophilus* goes on to tell Him

* Ἐπει δεῖξον βλέποντας τὰς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς ψυχῆς σε, καὶ τὰ ὅσα τῆς καρδίας σε ἀκούοντα· ὥσπερ γὰρ οἱ βλέποντες τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς τῷ σώματι κατανοοῦσι τὴν τῷ εἶναι καὶ ἐπίγειον πραγματείαν, — ἕτως ἔχει αὖ καὶ περὶ τὰ ὅσα τῆς καρδίας, καὶ τὰς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς ψυχῆς, δυνάσθαι θεὸν θεάσασθαι. (P. 5, 6.)

† Ερεῖς ἔν μοι. Σὺ δ' ἐλέπων, διήγησαί μοι τὸ ἰδόν τῷ Θεῷ. (P. 9.)

again, that the *Form of God* was ineffable and inexplicable, and could not be seen with the Eyes of Flesh *. He likewise points out out to Him the Reason, why he entertained such absurd and unworthy Thoughts of the Deity, He tells Him that this Way of thinking was both the natural and judicial Effect of a depraved Mind and a wicked Life. "Ισως δὲ ἔτι αὐτὸς σὺ ἄχρηστος ὢν τῷ Θεῷ περὶ τῆς Θεῆς ἔτω φρονεῖς. (P. 5.) And again more expressly. ἔτω καὶ σὺ, ὦ ἄνθρωπε, ἔχεις ὑπο-κεν- μένης τῆς ὀφθαλμῶν τῆς ψυχῆς σου ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων καὶ τῶν πρᾶξεών σου τῶν πονηρῶν. (P. 6.) He goes on in the following Paragraph, if not with a positive Charge of many heinous Immoralities, yet in such a Manner as to shew that He thought He could not clear Himself of them, and with an express Declaration in the Conclusion, that his Blindness in this Particular was owing to the Influence of his Vices over Him. The Paragraph is so much to the Purpose, that I will transcribe and translate it at length †. " There- fore

* Τὸ μὲν εἶδεν τῆς Θεῆς, ἄρρητον καὶ ἀνέκφραστον, καὶ μὴ συνάμενον ὀφθαλμοῖς σαρκίνοις ὁραθῆναι.

† Δειξὼν ἔν καὶ σὺ σεαυτὸν, εἰ ἐκ εἰ μοιχῶς, εἰ ἐκ εἰ πόρνου, εἰ ἐκ εἰ κλέπτης, εἰ ἐκ εἰ ἀρπαξ, εἰ ἐκ εἰ ἀποσερνητῆς, εἰ ἐκ εἰ ἀρσενοκοιτης, εἰ ἐκ εἰ ὕβρις, εἰ ἐκ εἰ λοιδόρου, εἰ ἐκ εἰ ὀργίλου, εἰ ἐκ εἰ φθονερὸς, εἰ ἐκ εἰ ἀλαζών, εἰ ἐκ εἰ ὑπερόπτης, εἰ ἐκ εἰ πλήκτης, εἰ ἐκ εἰ φιλάργυρος, εἰ ἐκ εἰ γονεῦσιν ἀπειθῆς, εἰ ἐκ εἰ τὰ τέλη σου παλεῖς. Τοῖς γὰρ ταῦτα πρᾶσσεσιν ὁ Θεὸς ἐκ ἐμ- φανίζεται.

" fore Do You now shew Yourself to me,
 " whether You are not an Adulterer, whether
 " You are not a Fornicator, whether you are
 " not a Thief, a Robber, or a Spoiler;
 " whether You are not a Defiler of Yourself
 " with Mankind, whether You are not abu-
 " sive or a Railer; whether you are not
 " Wrathful, Envious, Proud and Arro-
 " gant; whether You are not Quarrellsome or
 " Covetous, Disobedient to your Parents, or
 " a Trader in the Sale of your own Chil-
 " dren. For God does not appear to such as
 " commit these Things, unless They first
 " cleanse themselves from all such Pollution.
 " All these therefore that cloud your Sight,
 " as when a Flux of Humour falls into the
 " Eyes that they cannot see the Light of the
 " Sun. In like Manner, your Impieties, Oh
 " Man, have blinded You that You are not
 " able to attain to the Sight of the Deity."
 Whether he was guilty of all these Vices or
 not, the Application is express that he was
 Guilty of such of them, as had darkened his
 Understanding to such a Degree, as that He
 could not discern the Deity even in his Ope-

φανίζεται, ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον ἑαυτὸς καθάρισωσιν ἀπὸ παντὸς
 μολυσμῶ. Καὶ σοὶ ἐν ᾗπαντα ἐπισκοτεῖ, καθάπερ ὕλη ἐκ-
 φορὰ ἐπὶ γένηται τοῖς, ὀφθαλμοῖς, πρὸς τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι ἀτε-
 ρῆσαι τὸ ὡς τῷ ἡλίῳ: ἔγω καὶ σοι, ὦ ἀνθρώπι, ἐπισκοτῶσιν
 αἱ εἰσέβηαι πρὸς τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι σε ὁρᾶν τὸν Θεόν.

rations. He elfewhere tells Him, that He was under Error in all his Notions of thefe Things. ὥτε κατὰ πάντα πλανᾶσαι, ὦ ἄνθρωπε. (P. 33.)

This was his Opinion plainly delivered of the Perfon that He was arguing with, whom He well knew, and *of whose Character We know nothing more*, as Dr. M. obferves, *than what may be collected from the Writings of Theophilus.* (P. 71.) But from thence We may collect the very contrary of thofe good Qualities with which Dr. M. has complimented Him. *Theophilus* treats Him throughout the Whole as one corrupted, prejudiced, and blinded to the laft Degree, as one confining his Faith to the Objects of Senfe, and his Conduct to the Pleafures of it. He confiders and argues with Him from the very Beginning as one that would carry his Belief no farther than *the wonderful Works and beautiful Fabrick of this vifible World, placed continually before his Eyes.* In the Language of the Book of Wifdom, xiii. 1. He confiders Him as *vain by Nature, being Ignorant of God, that could not out of the Good things that are feen, know Him that is, neither by confidering the Works did acknowledge the Workmafter.* He represents Him as rejecting all Notion of a Spiritual Being, and denying the Poffibility of the Reftoration of the Human Body. Thefe two Points *Theophilus*

philus endeavours to establish throughout this Book, even from what he did acknowledge, the Reality of the Objects that were before his Eyes. From the Power and Use of the Effects, He argues a great intelligent Cause, and from several Revolutions in the known Course of Nature, He shews both the Possibility and Probability of the Resurrection of Mankind. This was not only a very solid Method of Reasoning in itself, but it was particularly proper to be applied to the Person that he was reasoning with, as being founded on the Objects of Sense, which with Him were the *Source of all Knowledge, and the Test of all Truth*. This was a right Way to remove his Prejudices, and to prepare Him for a View of the Evidences of Christianity, of which there is not a Syllable said in this Book. He repeats the Words which the other had used to Him, and which plainly shew the previous Difficulties that He stuck at, *viz.* the Want of any Idea of a Spirit, and the Impossibility of the Renovation of a Human Body after its Dissolution: for the former He demanded ocular Demonstration, and therefore it is not credible that he could admit of any thing less for the latter. Can We imagine that He, who desired to have the Deity shewn to him for his Conviction, would have credited so great a Miracle as

that of *raising the Dead* merely upon Testimony, and would have been satisfied with only having a Person shewn to Him, and being told that He had formerly been raised from the Dead? The Nature of the Case as well as the Form of the Phrase may assure Us that when He said, *δείξόν μοι τὸν Θεόν σε*, and *δείξόν μοι καὶ ἓνα ἐγερθέντα ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἵνα ἰδὼν, πιστεύσω*, He meant in both Cases equally to have the Testimony of his Senses for his Satisfaction, to see the *Deity* with his own Eyes, and to have a Person *raised from the Dead* in his own Presence. *Theophilus's* Answer is alike in both Cases. He tells Him that he ought to believe the Being and Providence of God, being demonstrable from his Works, tho' he could not see him with his Carnal Eyes, because He was incomprehensible*. So again He tells Him in the other Instance, that He ought to admit the Possibility of a future Resurrection, tho' He did not see an immediate Instance of it, because God had given other Proof of it in several similar Revolutions in the Formation and Preservation of the natural World†.

Now

* ἔτις ἐχοι ἀν καὶ τὸν Θεὸν μὴ δύνασθαι ὁραθῆναι ὑπὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ἀνθρωπίνων, διὰ δὲ τῆς προνοίας καὶ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῷ ἐλέπεται καὶ νοεῖται — ἔτι δὲ νοεῖν εἶναι τὸν Θεὸν κυβερνήτην τῶν ὅλων, εἰ καὶ ἔ θεωρεῖται ὀφθαλμοῖς σαρκίνοις, διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν ἀχώρητον εἶναι (P. 13, 14.)

† Ὁ μὲν ἔν Θεός σοι πολλὰ τεκμήρια ἐπιδείκνυσιν εἰς τὸ πιστεύειν φυτῶν. Ἐι γὰρ ἐλέει καταπόνητον τῇν τῶν καιρῶν, καὶ

Now We can with no more Reason infer, as Dr. *M.* does (P. 75.) from this Answer of *Theophilus*, that this Bishop knew that *there were no such Persons then in Being* as had been formerly raised from the Dead, because He did not give Him Satisfaction in the Way that He required, than We can infer that He thought there was no such Being as God, because He could not exhibit Him to View. Whereas in both Cases He refers Him to the Evidence that He already had in the Course and Constitution of Nature, which was indeed sufficient to prove the Certainty of a Supreme intelligent Being, and the Possibility and Probability of a future Resurrection; and which Kind of Evidence ought to be peculiarly convincing to Him.

This Answer however is, I think, a clear Proof that *Theophilus* did not understand the Demand as Dr. *M.* has interpreted it, in Relation to the Sight of some Person, who heretofore had been restored to Life. If He had, could He have avoided making some Reflection on the Unsuitableness as well as the Inefficacy of this Method to the Conviction of the Person who desired it? Could He have failed of giving some Reason, why so

καὶ ἡμερῶν καὶ νυκτῶν τελευτήν, πῶς καὶ αὐτὰ τελευτᾷ καὶ
ἐνίσταται. Τί δὲ καὶ ἐχὶ ἡ τῶν σπερμάτων καὶ καρπῶν γινω-
μένη ἐξ ἀνάστασις, &c.

easy a Method was not complied with, if such Persons were then living; or of assigning the true Reason, if They were now Dead the Second Time? Could He have omitted to observe, that the Spectators of the Facts still survived; and that the Testimony of the Miracle was in all Respects the same, as if the Subjects, on whom it was wrought, were still capable of being produced? Would He not have taken the Advantage of arguing, that This was reducing the Matter to the *Credibility of Witnesses* at last, and that if that was admitted, They might proceed a shorter Way to Work, and on this Foundation might establish at once the Truth of Christianity itself. Instead of all this, which might reasonably have been expected, We find Him answering throughout to the Supposition of his believing only what He could see, telling Him that this was not properly *Belief*; that even this Kind of Evidence was not so irresistible as He might imagine; referring Him however to Evidence enough of this Sort in the Course and Constitution of Nature. Should a Heathen at this Day make the same Demand, I know no properer Answer that could be given to it; nor could it be inferred from such an Expression, that He thought there was a Claim of those miraculous Powers still subsisting,
much

much less that He was shocked at it. It does not at all appear, that *Autolycus* knew there was any such Claim in the Church at that Time, but it was natural enough for a hardened Infidel, who would listen to no Sort of Testimony, to say, I will not believe the Possibility of a Resurrection, till I see an Instance of it.

There remains yet one farther clear Testimony from this Book itself, that *Autolycus* spake only of the *general Resurrection*, and had no Thought at that Time of disproving hereby any Pretensions to supernatural Endowments. Before I cite the Passage I will only observe, that *Theophilus* was so far from looking on him as “ a Contemner of the
“ Idolatry and Superstition of the Public
“ Religion, and desirous to embrace a more
“ rational Worship, if He could any where
“ find it,” that He reproaches Him with giving in to the Vulgar Idolatry and Superstition, and being so entirely devoted to the Objects of Sense, as even to mistake and adore them for Deities. Ἔπειτα πιστεύεις τὰ ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων γινόμενα ἀγάλματα, θεὸς εἶναι καὶ ἀρετὰς ποιεῖν· τῷ δὲ ποιήσαντί σε Θεῷ ἀπιστεῖς δύνασθαι σε καὶ μεταξὺ ποιῆσαι; (P. 25.) This shews plainly in what Sense He denied that the Dead could be raised, not in Opposition merely to any Pretensions of working such a
Miracle

Miracle at that Time, but from the Nature of the Thing at all Times, which He esteemed beyond the Power of any Deity that He owned; and *Theophilus*, to confine it to this Sense, after having referred to proper Emblems and Illustrations in the Course of Nature, of such a Restoration of the Human Species, is so ingenuous as to confess that He Himself formerly did not believe this *future Resurrection*, but was now brought to this Faith by a serious Contemplation of these Things which He had mentioned, confirmed likewise by farther Evidence, which He goes on to specify. Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἠπίστευον τῆτο ἕσσεσθαι, ἀλλὰ νῦν κατανοήσας αὐτὰ πίστεύω, &c. (P. 39.)

There remains nothing farther on this Head, for as all Dr. *M*'s Reasonings are founded on a Supposition of *Autolycus*'s demanding the Sight of a Person formerly raised, they fall of Course with the Disproof of that Point. He has objected indeed to me particularly the Authority of my Father, which would have been of great Weight with me, if the Force of Truth had not been of greater; for which I shall hope to stand excused. Why *Theophilus* might not think fit to work such a Miracle at present for his Conviction, according to my Interpretation of the Demand, I have before shewn; and shall only desire the Reader to recollect, how wicked

ed a Man, how absurd a Reasoner, how gross an Idolater, *Autolycus* is here represented to be by his intimate Acquaintance; and then He will probably think that *Theophilus's* Judgment was not ill founded, when He ventured to say before-hand, that even this Miracle would not certainly convince Him. He will farther see, that He took the right Method of arguing with the Person that He had to deal with, by beginning to prove from the Course of Nature, the Being, the Providence, the Power of God, and thereby leading Him gradually to, and preparing Him properly for the real Evidences of Divine Revelation.

Dr. *M.* had “ farther observed, that in
 “ the earlier Times also, after the Days of
 “ the Apostles, there is no Intimation of the
 “ Subsistence of this Miracle in the Church,
 “ except in a single Instance, found in the
 “ Writings of *Papias*, which *Eusebius*, who
 “ slightly touches it, seems to rank *among*
 “ *the other fabulous Stories recorded by that*
 “ *Weak Man.*” Several of his Answerers
 justly observed that this was said without the
 least Authority, and that *Eusebius* cast no
 such Imputation on this Report. Neither
 the Words used concerning it, nor the Man-
 ner in which it is introduced, give any
 Reason to think that he esteemed the Re-
 port

port of this Miracle unworthy of Credit. Dr. *M.* now undertakes to shew this chiefly from the last, from the Paragraph in which the Account is mentioned, of which He has given all those Parts which might seem to confirm his Opinion, leaving out, as usual, those Circumstances, which may well be interpreted to imply the contrary. *Eusebius* begins with observing, that *Papias* was a very diligent Collector of every Thing which He could learn from the Apostles, or from those who had conversed with them, and this Ecclesiastical Historian professes that it would be worth while to record some of the Miracles, which *Papias* had preserved by Tradition*. Would He have thought this worth while, if He looked on these Miracles as Legends undeserving of Credit? The Miracles, which He reports, are only two, the One of a Dead Person, who had been raised to Life; the Other of *Justus*, surnamed *Barsabas*, who drank a Cup of Deadly Poison, and yet by God's Mercy receiv'd no Harm from it. Now if We can form any Reason, why He thought these in particular worthy to be recorded, it was because they answered to some Predictions of such Gifts

* ἄξιον δὲ ταῖς ἀποδοθεῖσαι τῷ Παπία φωναῖς, προσά-
ψαι λέξεις ἐτέρας αὐτῷ, δι' ἃν παράδοξα τινα ἴσoreῖ καὶ
ἄλλα, ὡς ἂν ἐκ παραδόσεως εἰς αὐτὸν ἑλθόντα.

in the Sacred Writings. Our Saviour had given in his Life-Time a Power to raise the Dead, and just before his Ascension, had foretold that amongst other supernatural Gifts, This should attend his Disciples, that *if They drank any deadly Thing it should not hurt them*. Of the former Miracle few Instances had been recorded, and of the latter not so much as one, and therefore *Eusebius* might think it very proper to perpetuate the Memory of these; but had He intended only to stigmatize some fabulous Reports, certainly He would not have selected such Instances as answered exactly to those prophetic Promises, lest He might seem to cast some Reflection on the Sacred Writings. Nay, as if He designed particularly to confirm the Credibility of these Miracles, He comments, as it were, on the Circumstances, observes, that He Himself had before made Mention of the Residence of *Philip* and his Daughters at *Hierapolis*, from whom this Report came: And He goes on with Respect to the latter Miracle to observe that it related to the same *Justus*, surnamed *Barsabas*, who is spoken of in the *Acts of the Apostles* as a joint Candidate with *St. Matthias* for the Apostleship. Would He have taken such Care to notify and distinguish this, if He had thought it a fabulous Story, and meant to record his Opinion

nion of it as such?---Well, but He observes afterwards, that *Papias* was a weak Man;--- He does so, but He does not therefore consider Him as an incompetent Witness of Facts, but as an ill Judge of some Doctrines. *Eusebius* Himself apparently, I think, makes this Distinction. In the Beginning of this Chapter He quotes *Papias* as saying that He would set forth what He had heard from the Ancients, and well remembred, together with his own Interpretations *. Now some Facts which He had learnt from Others, and which He could not mistake the Meaning of; *Eusebius* thought worth while to report from Him, and sets them down without any Censure or Hint of their Incredibility, nay with Circumstances which imply his own Belief of them; but when He comes to the Notions and Opinions, which *Papias* delivered down by Tradition, and which a Man of no great Understanding might easily be supposed to misapprehend, here the Historian changes his Style, represents his Authority as of very little Weight in the Case of such Points, speaks of his Reports and Traditions of this Sort as more like Fables than any Thing else, passes them over therefore without Notice, except

[* ἐκ ἀκρόασις δὲ σοι καὶ ὅσα ποτὲ παρὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καλῶς ἔμαθον καὶ καλῶς ἐμνημόνευσα, συγκατατάξαι ταῖς ἐξηγήσεσιν, &c.

in one Specimen, which likewise He accounts for, and shews how the Mistake had arisen *. Now all the Charge which is here brought against *Papias*, is, that He had not a Head to see thro' the mystical Sense of Prophecies, but was apt to interpret every Thing literally; which, however true, was no Prejudice to his Understanding, and reporting miraculous Facts, they being certainly to be understood literally. Since therefore *Eusebius* applied this Observation concerning Him, particularly to *Parables* and *Doctrines*, since He reported Miracles from Him without any Appearance of Doubt and Distrust, and brought in this Distinction, where it might be expected, in Matters of Speculation and Argument, there is no Appearance of his ranking the Miracle now referred to amongst other *fabulous* Stories, but there is the strongest Presumption imaginable against his doing so.

Dr. M. returns to the old Objection, that this Miracle stands upon the single Testimony of *Irenæus*. This Exception would have been of as much Force against St. *John's* Testimony in some Instances, and St. *Paul's* in others, but is indeed of no Force in any Case.

* Καὶ ἄλλα ὃ ὁ αὐτὸς συγγραφεὺς ὡς ἐν παραδόσεια ἀγέρε ἐν αὐτὸν ἥκοντα παρτέθεται, ξένας τέ τινας παρβολὰς τῆ σωτηρίας καὶ διδασκαλίας αὐτοῦ, καὶ τινα ἄλλα μυθώτερα, &c.

If the Witness be unexceptionable, the Silence of Others cannot disprove such positive Evidence. However there are collateral Circumstances to support the Credibility of it: This Gift was promised and bestowed at first amongst Others; that Others continued We have the concurrent Testimony of all the Primitive Writers, and therefore it may be presumed that this did not entirely cease during the Continuance of the rest, unless there be some positive Evidence to the contrary, or unless some Reason can be assigned from the Nature of the Thing, why this should be withdrawn sooner than the others. Now neither of these is attempted; some Reasons may be and have been given, why this Miracle might not be so frequent, and of Course not so frequently mentioned as some others, but None can be offered, why this, whilst others were still abounding, should not be performed *on necessary Occasions*, to which *Irenæus* expressly limits it. There is not therefore the least Ground to call his Testimony in Question as to this Article, if He was Himself a competent Witness and Judge of such a Miracle.

This Point, it was foreseen, the Question might be reduced to at last, and therefore Dr. M. says, that “ He has shewn *Irenæus* to
 “ be of so credulous, superstitious and en-
 “ thusiastical

“ thusiastical a Turn as would dispose Him
 “ to embrace and assert any fabulous Tale
 “ which tended, as He thought, in any
 “ Manner to advance the Credit of the Gos-
 “ pel, or to confute an Heretick ;” (P. 81.)
 He is pleased to add, that the Champions on
 the other Side have not attempted to give any
 particular Answer to his Exceptions of this
 Sort, and then, after a Compliment to his
 own Judgment, ventures to pronounce that
 “ there is not a Grain of Truth in *Irenæus’s*
 “ Report, nor a single Circumstance belong-
 “ ing to it make it probable,” (P. 82.) But
 here He has been Guilty of a gross Mistake
 in Fact, as well as in Judgment, which is
 more than He could justly lay to the Charge
 of *Irenæus*. His Answerers took into Consi-
 deration his Objections to the Character of that
 Pious and Primitive Father. They All observed
 that a Mistake in Opinion could not inca-
 pacitate a Man for a Witness of Fact, and
 that whether He reasoned well or not on the
 Sense of ancient Writings, He could not but
 know the Truth of present Transactions,
 which are reported as done frequently *on*
necessary Occasions, by and before the whole
 Church. The severest Censurers of the Fa-
 thers always made this Distinction, and al-
 lowed their Testimony in Cases which fell
 under their own Senses, tho’ they did not

allow their Authority or Capacity in the Way of Argumentation or Judgment. It lay on Dr. M. in Reply to this, to shew why Errors in Speculation must necessarily blind a Mans Eyes in Matters of Fact, or why a Man could not judge of a Miracle, especially so circumstanced as this, because perhaps He misapprehended Points of a very different Nature. This He has not attempted now, nor had He offered any Thing before to prove that *Irenæus* would knowingly embrace and assert any fabulous Tale to serve a present Purpose. The only Instance in which He expressly charged Him with wilful Forgery, in relation to his Report of the *Age of Christ*, I took particularly into Consideration, and shewed that there was not the least Ground for such a Charge. I shewed that Dr. M. had added to, and misrepresented his Account; that He might well be understood as referring to the general Heads of his Discourse and not to this Particular Point, when He laid Claim to a general Apostolical Tradition; and that the Most which could be made of it was a Misinterpretation, easy to be accounted for, of a Passage of Scripture; and that not originally his, but received by Report, which presently sunk upon a proper Examination of it. Dr. M. attempts not to renew and vindicate this Charge, but, as
conscious

conscious of the Insufficiency of it, passes it over, and favours us only with his own Opinion, without any farther Argument to support it. I shall take the Liberty therefore to conclude again, in Opposition to Him, that the Miracle in this Case was probable; and the Witness credible; that when We are assured by such concurrent Testimony, that other supernatural Gifts continued at that Time, 'tis likely at least that This should do so too; that *Irenæus* must know whether the Church did *on such necessary Occasions* apply in joint Prayer for such a Miracle, and whether they succeeded in it; and that He understood and practised Christianity too well, to have been guilty of a wilful Fraud on any Occasion; much more on this, in which all the Christian Brethren could so easily have detected Him.

Here again I cannot avoid the farther Complaint of Misrepresentation. Dr. M. not only passes over what I had said on this Head, but accuses me of saying what I never said. He charges his Adversaries as affirming with one Voice, that *Irenæus's Testimony is superior to all Exception*, and laying it down as an indisputable Maxim; that *the positive Evidence of a Witness, so pious and so sincerely devoted to the Christian Cause, must necessarily demand our Belief in all Cases, how extraordinary or incredible soever they may*

be in their own Nature. (P. 81.) These Words again are printed in *Italicks*, tho' whence they are taken I know not. None of his Adversaries have either used these Expressions, or spoken to this Purpose; or attempted to defend the primitive Fathers by so unwise and so unlimited a Position. But it will be easy to write *Vindications*, if a Man may take the Liberty of making his Opponents say what he pleases, as well as of saying what he pleases against them.

Dr. M. proceeds to charge his Answerers with giving a different Account of the *Gift of Tongues* from all who wrote before them; but has failed as much in the Proof of it, as his *Defender* had done before Him. All former Writers He represents as affirming this Gift to have been absolutely necessary to the Propagation of the Gospel, and without which no Success could be expected: But they do not represent it as an *Evidence* to those whom they Taught, of the Truth of what they Taught, nor could it be, unless, as in the Case of the Apostles, They knew their Circumstances before-hand, and could therefore be sure that They had not attained this Knowledge and Use of various Languages by Human Means. But They all represent it as necessary to introduce them to the *Conversation* of the Nations and People to be converted, without which their other Mi-
racles

racles could have been of no Avail, and They must have spent their Time in qualifying themselves to preach, instead of actually preaching to the World. Nor do *these Doctors speak in a different Tone*, as he is pleased to express it, for They allow this great Use of this Gift, as much as Any who wrote before them. But it was obvious to observe, that when this Opportunity of conversing with the several Nations in their respective Languages, could be brought about by Human Means, it was not to be expected that Providence should work Miracles unnecessarily, but that this End being otherwise supplied in gaining a Method of Intercourse with those who were to be converted, other Kind of supernatural Gifts might better be offered in the Way of *Evidence*, and were therefore more likely to be continued: And it was as obvious to observe in the next Place, that this End of gaining Admission into Discourse with them was effectually answered by the Conversion of some of the Natives, who could speak to their Brethren in their own Language; who, tho' they might stand in Need of other Sort of Miracles to convince them, yet could not want this to enable them to talk with them. If therefore We find little Mention of this after the Days of the Apostles, or less Mention of it,

at least, than of other supernatural Gifts, this is just what might be expected from the Nature and Reason of the Thing. Dr. M. however is pleased to call this *a mere imaginary Scheme, without the least Foundation in Reason, History, or Experience.* Its Foundation in Reason may be seen in what has been already offered. The History of the Propagation of the Gospel and of the Labours of the Apostles, instead of contradicting, does much confirm it. Had They not made Use of the Assistance of Some of their first Converts, and employed them to be their Fellow-Labourers in the Conversion of Others, They could not have made such speedy Advance from Place to Place, nor have spread Christianity thro' so great a Part of the World in one Age. They did not, They could not bring Missionaries enough with them thus endued with the *Gift of Tongues* to settle in Each Place where the Gospel was preached, and to confine to them the Work of the Ministry; and Ecclesiastical History assures us that they did not: but that this Office was communicated to the Natives of each Place. St. Clement tells the *Corinthians*, that the Apostles, *preaching through Countries and Cities, appointed the First-Fruits of them, proving them by the Spirit, to be the Bishops and Ministers of those who should afterwards*

wards believe *. The imperfect Accounts which remain to Us of the Lives of the first Bishops, and most eminent Preachers of Christianity, shew the same, and indeed in the Nature of the Thing it could not be otherwise. Dr. M. opposes to this, the Difficulty of their gaining a competent Knowledge themselves so as to be able to instruct and convert Others. “ The Jewish Converts, He
 “ thinks, might soon become Masters of the
 “ Mystery of the Gospel, and be qualified to
 “ teach it; But to Converts of barbarous Na-
 “ tions and strange Languages, utterly unac-
 “ quainted with every Principle, which bore
 “ any Relation either to Judaism or Christi-
 “ anity, the Case was quite Different, and to
 “ acquire a competent Knowledge of the
 “ Christian Doctrine must have been a
 “ Work of much Time and great Difficulty,
 “ so as to be hardly attainable at all in any
 “ Degree of Perfection, except to a very few.”
 (P. 87.) I may here return the Obser-
 vation, that *this is an imaginary Scheme, with-
 out the least Foundation in Reason, History, or
 Experience.* If the Gentiles had not the Ad-
 vantage of the previous Knowledge of the Old
 Testament to lead them to the Belief of the

* Κατὰ χώρας ἐν ἡ πόλεις κηρύσσοντες, καθίστανον τὰς
 ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν, δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι, εἰς ἐπισκόπους
 καὶ διακόνους τῶν μέλλοντων πιστεύειν. Epist. ad. Cor. §. 42.

New, They were likewise without those Prejudices, which the *Jews* had contracted from the former, against the Belief of any possible Alteration of that Dispensation, and against the Notion of a spiritual and *suffering Messiah*. If those Prophecies were now first shewn to the Heathens, and the plain Completion of them first pointed to in the History of our Saviour's Life and Death, his Doctrines and Sufferings, They, not having any Prepossession of a different Interpretation, were more likely to discern and to admit the Sufficiency of that Evidence, than the *Jews*, who had long been acquainted with those Prophetical Writings, but had always had a different Notion of them. All Reasonable Men among the Gentiles likewise, were more sensible of the Expediency and Desirableness of a Revelation at that Time, than Those who were in Possession already of one that was of Divine Original, and which they thought to be perpetual and irreversible. Whatever other Causes might contribute to this Effect, from the greater practical Purity or more honest Disposition of Mind, amongst the unenlightened Heathens, yet the Fact is certain, that far the greater Part of the Primitive Converts was taken from amongst them. They were more easily converted and taught the Dispensation of *Christ*,
than

than those who were already attached to the Dispensation of *Moses*. We find this Observation made more than once in the Sacred Writings. Thus, Acts xiii. 45, &c. when the Jews were filled with Envy, and spake against those Things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, it was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken unto You, but seeing Ye put it from You, and judge Yourselves unworthy of everlasting Life, lo, We turn to the Gentiles; for so hath the Lord commanded us. — And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed. So again, St. Paul, after having cited and applied a Passage of one of their Prophets, in Relation to the Perverseness of the Jewish Nation, concluded his Reprehension of them in these Words, *Be it known therefore unto you, that the Salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.* Acts xxviii. 28. These Barbarians, as he calls them, were so far from being more dull of Understanding and hardened of Heart than the Jews, that they were much less so, and proved more capable of Instruction and Conviction, than those Disciples of *Moses*.

Again,

Again, the Difficulties which He has here represented concerning the Time that must be taken up in Learning, by an Argumentative Method, the Nature of God and of Man, of the Mercies granted by the former, and the Duties owing from the latter, are of some Weight in the present State of Mankind, when supernatural Gifts are no longer bestowed; but were out of the Question, when immediate Miracles testified a Divine Commission, and at once gave Authority to all the positive Dictates of it. So *Bishop Burnet*, from whom He borrowed this Reflection and perverted it, states the Case. “It is so sublime a Mystery,” says he, “to think on God and his Attributes and Works, or to think of another State and the Way that leads to it, that till God furnishes out a new Mission of Apostles, with a Measure of those extraordinary Gifts, which were poured out on the great Pentecost, it is not easy to imagine how the Conversion of the Heathen Nations should be made.” He thought that the Method of Teaching by mere Reasoning would be very slow, if not totally ineffectual, and that therefore Miracles were wanting to teach and to confirm the Will of God in a more authoritative and compendious Manner. And however true this may be, when applied as

Bishop

Bishop Burnet applied it, to the present Conversion of the Heathens, yet it could not affect the Apostolical Age, when by *Dr. M's* own Concession, Miraculous Powers were granted and exerted. These proved in a short and convincing Method the Claim of Divine Assistance in those who came to convert them, and gave a clear and strong Sanction to what They delivered as the Will of God. The *Form of sound Words*, which They delivered, was neither obscure nor tedious, and as They carried the written Scriptures with them to each new founded Church, This made the Matter still more easy with Respect to their Instruction. Any Men of plain and common Understanding, who saw evidently an Interposition from Heaven in frequent and undoubted Miracles, who heard the Connection expressly declared between those Miracles, and the Doctrines and Precepts delivered, who observed the Reasonableness of the Duties enjoined, and the Importance of the Motives by which they were enforced, could not fail of receiving sufficient Conviction and Knowledge, and if they were but *faithful Men* might soon be *able to teach others also*. And here I cannot but observe, that *Dr. M.* is most certainly *speaking in a very different Tone* from what he did at the Beginning of the Vindication. Then the Law of Nature was all-

all-sufficient, and “ from the visible Fabric
 “ of the World, the Reason of Man was in-
 “ abled to trace out the Divine Nature and
 “ Attributes, and by a gradual Deduction of
 “ Consequences, to learn his own Nature
 “ also with all the Duties belonging to it,
 “ which related either to God or his Fellow-
 “ Creatures.” (P. 7.) Now the Reason of
 Man was not sufficient to comprehend even
 when He was taught; nor could the Poor
 Heathens, with the Advantage of immediate
 Revelation, with Signs and Wonders offered
 to them from Heaven to open their Eyes and
 Hearts, and with Doctrines and Duties plain-
 ly proposed to them upon this Authority,
 understand enough of it to be entrusted with
 it, or to teach their yet uninstructed Brethren.
 Such different Schemes could this Man,
 unquestionably of great Reason Himself, fall
 into, when He had different Views to serve
 by the Representation. He goes on to say,
 that “ Experience has evinced the contrary,
 “ and shewn that either no such Custom had
 “ ever obtained, or that it was wholly fruit-
 “ less and ineffectual from the very Begin-
 “ ning; since in all the Barbarous Nations
 “ of the World, no Footstep has ever been
 “ discovered of any Succession of native
 “ Preachers, nor any Remains indeed of
 “ Christianity itself, though it is confidently
 “ affirmed

“ affirmed to have been preach’d to them
 “ all.” (P. 87.) May One not well call in
 Question both the Truth and the Pertinence
 of this Observation? For many Nations,
 which might well be called *barbarous*, when
 the Gospel was first preached to them, have
 since much improved in Learning and Mora-
 lity, and do, God be thanked, to this Day,
 retain their Christianity. And how does the
 supposed Loss of it in other Nations still con-
 tinuing *barbarous*, affect the Question, whe-
 ther the Gospel was taught them by their
 own Natives in Conjunction with the first
 Planters of it, or altogether by Foreigners
 for a considerable Time? Some retained the
 Profession of Christianity for some Centuries,
 and yet their *Candlestick*, thro’ natural and
 judicial Causes, was afterwards taken from
 them: And some Footsteps of Christianity, if
 We may credit the Missionaries, have been
 found amongst very remote and unimproved
 Nations: But whether this be true or false,
 I see not how it relates to the Point before
 Us.

Dr. M. adds, that “ He has never
 “ read or heard that any such Method has
 “ ever been practised, or thought to be prac-
 “ ticable by the Missionaries of these modern
 “ Ages, for how great soever their Harvest
 “ may have been found, yet all the Labour-
 “ ers

ers in it have constantly been supplied from Time to Time from Christian Countries." (P. 87, 88.) This again is highly doubtful, and extremely improbable, from the Accounts which I have read of these Missions; but be it never so true, it is Nothing to the present Purpose. The Question before Us, is, whether whilst some miraculous Powers are allowed to have continued, any Reason can be assigned, why this *Gift of Tongues* in particular should cease before the Rest, or be less insisted on in the frequent Claim of miraculous Endowments: But certainly this Question cannot be determined by any Practice now, when no Miracles at all do really subsist. The first Planters of the Gospel might use this Method of employing the First-Fruits amongst the Natives to convert Others, tho' the present Missionaries do not; and They had more and better Reasons for doing it, and greater Advantages towards making it effectual, by their other miraculous Gifts, than Any can now with Truth and Justice pretend to have.

The only remaining Article relates to the Case of *Irenæus* Himself, whom Dr. M. on the Authority of Dr. Cave, represented as being in great Want Himself of the Gift which He so liberally ascribed to Others. Here He was censured for adopting the Er-

tor of a great and good Man, from whom He might have learnt many useful and important Truths, without any Attempt, by an Appeal to the Original, to shew that his Interpretation was right. He now excuses Himself for taking this Method by saying that "his Interpretation would be sure to be
 " suspected by all Writers of the same Zeal
 " and Genius with these Doctors." (P. 91.) But these Doctors did not censure Him for quoting Dr. *Cave*, but for not quoting *Irenæus* Himself. He was at Liberty to pay as much Deference to Dr. *Cave*'s Authority as He pleased, and if He had paid more, He might perhaps have been oftner in the Right. But to omit quoting the Original itself in a Point of such Importance, and on which He Himself lays so much Stress, was, to say the best, very gross Negligence.

Well, the Original is now produced, and Dr. *M.* now maintains that "his Exposition
 " of *Irenæus*'s Words has given us the true
 " Meaning of them, and the only one in-
 " deed which they will bear." And here I am favoured, as usual, with the severest Mark of his Displeasure, and my Translation is censured as *flat and insipid, and carrying no distinct Sense or Idea*. I had rendred καὶ πρὸς ἑσάρδαρον διάλεκτον τὸ πλεῖστον ἀσχολουμένων, and
are chiefly engaged in a barbarous Dialect.
 This

This is the Version censured. Let Us now examine his Correction of it. He tells Us that “the Word ἀσχολημένων implies a Leisure particularly devoted to literary Studies;” (P. 95.) but He should have told Us at the same Time what Authority He had to say this; for his Word will not pass with me for Authority, and I find no other to support it. Indeed it seems to imply the direct contrary, and to mean Employment of any other Sort rather than of applying vacant Hours to mental Improvement. For though Dr. M. is pleased to talk of employing his Leisure upon this Language, yet the Word plainly signifies his Want of Leisure to employ, thro’ his active Engagement upon Business. This the Verb ἀσχολεύω according to its known Etymology apparently signifies * ;
 This

* Ἀσχολῶ Occupatus—Σχολή enim significat quod vulgō ευκαιρία dicitur. i. e. tempus a negotiis vacuum. Suidas.—Ἀσχολία ἢ πολλὴ περὶ τι σπουδὴ, καὶ συνεχὴς ἐπιμέλεια. Phavorin.—Ἀσχολία, ἐνδελεχισμός. Hesych.—Ἀσχολεύομαι, occupor, non sumotiosus.—Ἀσχολία, cum quis ita negotium habet, ut vacare non possit. Constant.—Ἀσχολῶ cui otium non est.—Ἀσχολεύω, occupatus sum, negotiis distringor. Scap.—Ἀσχολῶντας μὴ καὶ πολεμῶντας φαίνεσθαι ἀγαθὸς εἰρήνην δ’ ἄγοντας καὶ σχολάζοντας ἀνδραποδάδεις. Aristot. ap. Scap.—Ἀσχολεύω, occupatus sum, negotiis distringor.—ἀσχολεύειν περὶ τι significat occupari circa aliquid. Steph.—Ἀσχολεύεσθαι ὥστε ἵνα σχολάζωμεν, versamur enim in rebus gerendis, ut in otio vivamus. Aristot. ap. Steph.—Ἡμῖν ὥστε σχολὴ μὴ φιλοσοφεῖν, ἀσχολία δὲ κακουργεῖν. Synes. ap. Steph.
 Ἀσχολία

This the several Examples given under the Word in Lexicons apparently confirm, and this the Connection in the Passage referred to evidently requires. He says, *You will not expect any Oratory from Us, who reside among the Celtæ, and are chiefly engaged in a barbarous Dialect.* Is it not plain that his Residence amongst that People occasioned this his almost constant Employment in that Language, that is, by conversing with them, by teaching them in their own Tongue the Truth, the Nature, and the Importance of Christianity. This was the proper Work and Business of his Mission, and this, as He represents it, and as in the Nature of the Thing it must do, took up much the greatest Part of his Time and Thoughts, so that He had little or no Leisure for an Application merely to the Study of Words, and Improvement in Rhetorick. His daily Engagement

Ἀσχολίαν τῇ φιλοσοφίας ποιῶμαι. Philosophiæ non vaco. Plut. ap. Steph. When Dr. M. therefore tells us that ἀσχολέομαι implies a Leisure particularly devoted to literary Studies, He contradicts all the Lexicons ancient and modern, and the best Greek Authors, who often use the Word in a Sense directly contrary. It is indeed no better than a Blunder, a Mistake of ἀσχολέω for σχολάζω—And yet this is the Man, who would send his Answerers to School again, and charges them with such a Bigottry as will not allow any Sense in any Words, which do not tally with their own Prejudices; or with such an Ignorance of the Greek, as is incapable of discovering what their Sense really is.

was in the Conversion of Heathens, and the Confirmation of Believers, and the Language of the People, amongst whom He was stationed for this good Work, obliged Him to the constant Use of a barbarous Dialect; and such continual Conversation in an uncouth Language was a very good Reason, why his Style in another Tongue might be less polished, and why no Artificial Composition of Words which He had not learned was to be expected from Him *. He had neither Leisure, nor Inclination, as He signifies, to set about a Work of so little Importance, and the habitual Use of a different and unimproved Dialect might be very likely to disqualify Him for it. Whereas if He had so much Leisure, as Dr. M. represents Him to have, as to spend the greatest Part of it in his Study in learning the Language of that Country (for some, We know, He spent in writing *Greek*) then He could scarce avoid remarking on the Difference of the Beauty and Purity of the One above the Other, and He might well retain the former, tho' He might make a shift to understand the latter.

* *The English Reader, by Dr. M's and Mr. T's Representation of the Sense of the Passage, might be ready to conclude, that the Relative which, referred to the Language of the Celtæ; whereas, the Gender of the original ἡ, makes it as certain that τῆς γυν is the Antecedent, as if Irenæus had repeated the Word, and said expressly, which Art we have not learned.*

This

This private Method of attaining the latter was much less likely to debase his Style, or to occasion such an Apology upon that Account, than the familiar and daily Use of it amongst his own People: And therefore He so particularly mentions his Residence amongst them, and constant Application to them in that barbarous Dialect, as the Reason why a Negligence of Style and Impropriety of Language might perhaps grow upon Him. And now let Us compare the two Translations. The common Rendring of the Word, and the Reason of the Thing, do both confirm that which I had offered, by which *Irenæus* was represented as chiefly engaged in a barbarous Dialect, that is, by Reason of conversing constantly with the Natives: Whereas neither the usual Acceptation of the Word, nor the plain Sense of the Thing, nor its Relation to the Context, will admit of Dr. M's Translation, in which it is said, that *the greatest Part of Irenæus's Leisure was intirely imployed upon a barbarous Dialect*, He is represented in this very Sentence as scarce having any Leisure, and as almost totally taken up with the Work of his Ministry; with the proper Offices of an active and vigilant Bishop, which could not be otherwise than in the Language of that Place. What Intervals of Time He could find from his Local Duties,

We see He spent for the Service of the universal Church in Works written in a more universal Language. Dr. M. Himself remarks that He did so.

I ask then, upon a Review of this Passage, how it appears that *Irenæus* was in great Want of the Gift of Tongues, or was put to great Difficulty and Trouble in learning the *Celtick* Language, as He is here represented to have been? There is not a Word in the Original to denote his *learning* the Language, nor could the Dr. even by his own Translation pervert the Sentence so as to imply it. He has made Him indeed mention *Leisure* even where He was mentioning the Want of it, and was speaking of his almost total Engagement with the *Celtæ* in their own Language: But had this been less determinate, and should We allow the Dr's Translation, that the *greatest Part of his Leisure was entirely employed upon a barbarous Dialect*; even here there is not a Word said, how He first came by the Knowledge of this Language, but how much He was now employed in the Exercise of it. Dr. M. says, it would be ridiculous to suppose that He was taken up by *writing this barbarous Dialect*; there is Nothing said in the Original about *writing* any more than about *learning* this Language, and yet, notwithstanding Dr. M's absolute Determination

mination of it, it is not improbable that He might have occasional Calls to write to, or for the Use of some of the People amongst whom He resided. But suppose He did not, his other Labours would fully answer the Import of the Expression here used. Undoubtedly He confined not his Care and Duty to the stated Times and Exercises of external Worship, but took every Opportunity of instructing some, and admonishing others, of convincing Gainfayers, and confirming Believers; and even diligently sought out such Opportunities. I suppose this Good Man's Time and Pains to have been thus employed in securing and teaching, and enlarging his Flock by personal Application to Each, as Occasion offered, as well as by Assistance in the Assemblies of the Faithful; and thus by private as well as publick Exhortations was his Time almost engrossed, in Neither of which could He be of any Service to them but by conversing with them in their own barbarous Dialect, and therefore He might very properly say, ἡμῶν τῶν ἐν Κελτοῖς διατριβόντων, καὶ περὶ βάρβαρον διαλεκτον τὸ πλεῖστον ἀρχομένων. If Any chuse with Dr. M. to call these private Works the *Employment of Leisure*, yet the Sense and Argument must be the same, and these in Conjunction with the Discharge of the Publick Offices of Religion, might

might well justify his saying that He was *chiefly engaged in this Language.*

There is yet another and very material Argument to shew that this Primitive Bishop did not in this Place allude to any Difficulty in learning the Language. My Father has proved at large (Differt. in Iren. 3 & 4.) that this Work was wrote in *Irenæus's* Old Age, that He had been now many Years at *Lyons*, first a Presbyter, and then Bishop. He could not therefore now have the Language to learn; and if He had been put to any Trouble in learning it, that Trouble must have now been long over. There could be no Occasion to mention as an Impediment to his present Oratory a Difficulty which had so long since been past; whereas in the other Interpretation the Apology was just, for the longer He had been accustomed to this barbarous Dialect, the more reasonably might He apprehend that it might affect and debase his Style.

“ Here another Question, says Dr. M.
 “ naturally occurs, in which the Reader by
 “ this Time may be impatient to be satisfied,
 “ that is, *by what Means Irenæus could acquire*
 “ *the Use of this barbarous Dialect, which*
 “ *gave Him so much Trouble?*” (P. 94.) As
 to the Trouble of it, This has been shewn to
 be Imaginary, to have no Foundation in the
 Words

Words of *Irenæus*, but to have been supplied intirely by Dr. *M*'s fruitful Imagination. The Question itself remains, and Dr. *M*. observes, that “ on this Head our Doctors are “ wholly Silent: They do not chuse to “ affirm directly, that it was infused into “ Him by *Inspiration* ;” This then is a Proof of their proper Caution, that they would not assert, like Dr. *M*. without Authority, nor affirm what they could not Prove. They sufficiently obviated Dr. *M*'s Objection from *Irenæus*'s supposed Want of this Gift, which was all that concerned them, as it might seem to invalidate his Testimony concerning it. If They did not go farther, if they did not think themselves authorized to determine where History is Silent, They may, I hope, stand excused. To the Question itself therefore I shall only say, that the Knowledge of the *Celtick* Language might be infused into *Irenæus*, for any thing that the Dr. has shewn to the Contrary ; or He might be skilled in it before He was sent into *Gaul*, and might be chosen to that Mission for that Reason ; or if it were allowed that He acquired it afterwards, neither will this be any Objection against his plain and positive Testimony. He was then probably but young, no Bishop or Leader of the Church. The *Gift of Tongues* might still continue in the Church, and yet every
Presbyter,

Presbyter, who was sent into foreign Parts, might not be endued with it.

It is added as a farther Objection, that
 “ a Dialect infused by God could not possibly
 “ create any Difficulty to Him, either in learn-
 “ ing, speaking, or writing it, since the perfect
 “ Use of it would be communicated at once,
 “ and would flow from Him as freely as his
 “ Native Tongue.” Nor has it been proved
 that *Irenæus* made any such Complaint of any
 such peculiar Difficulty. But a Man may be
 forced by his Situation and Circumstances,
 to converse, or write, or do both, so much
 in a foreign Tongue, as to forget his own,
 or at least not to be able to write with
 Propriety and Elegance in it: And this was
 all that *Irenæus* apprehended from his habitual
 Use of the *Celtick* Tongue.—Dr. M. goes on,
 “ much less can we Imagine that it (a Dialect
 “ infused by God) would debase the Purity
 “ of any other more valuable or useful Lan-
 “ guage, of which He was previously pos-
 “ sessed, since that would be a real Injury to
 “ Him;” Now in a Christian Account, that
 is the most valuable Language in which most
 Good can be done, and that certainly must be
 the Language of that Country, whatever it
 was, to which the Providence of God had
 called a Man to preach the Gospel. *Irenæus*
 certainly did not think Himself *injured* in
 being

being made instrumental to the Glory of his Redeemer amongst a barbarous People, even tho' by the constant Use of their Tongue He might lose a little of the Propriety and Elegance of the Greek Language. The concluding Remark is, that " whilst this inabled
 " Him to preach the Gospel in one particular
 " Place, it would render Him less able to
 " preach it with the same Force in Another." But neither did the Success of Christianity in any Place depend on their preaching it in the highest Terms of Elegance and Oratory, nor if it had, could this have affected the Case of *Irenæus*, who spent his Life in *Gaul*, and there concluded it.

I have been so minute and particular in examining every Argument of the *Vindication*, that I will not lengthen these Remarks by reviewing the triumphant Recapitulation. As it rests on their Strength, it will fall with them, if they are judged insufficient; and this is freely left to the Judgment of the impartial Reader. I have likewise hereby obviated some farther Remarks, whereby Mr. *Toll*, in Opposition to a Performance far superior to his or mine, thought fit to reinforce his Defence. If he does not yet see whither the Tendency of Dr. *M*'s Argument leads, or is determined at all Events to support it, I shall content Myself with wishing Him to

M m

employ

employ his Time better than in this Controversy, and with taking Care to employ my own otherwise; for I feel no Inclination to continue a Dispute with a Gentleman who can think it Wit or Argument upon this important Subject, to talk of *Providence's shewing Tricks*, and of *making a Rout about Miracles*.

E R R A T A.

PREFACE, p. 3. l. 11. for *interfered* read *intervened*. P. 26. l. 1. d. *thought fit*. P. 28. l. 24. d. *but*. Book, p. 26. l. 8. for *miraluous* r. *miraculous*. P. 40. l. 29. before *placed* insert *and*. P. 55. l. 8. for *ελων* r. *ὅλων*. P. 89. l. 24. for *χρισῶ* r. *χρισῶ*. P. 120. l. 11, 12. d. *and the Nature of the Thing, confirm the Credibility of the Fact*. P. 217. l. 23. before *may* insert *it*. P. 236. l. 19. for *of* r. *Charge on*. P. 250. l. 26. before *the* insert *that*. P. 299. l. 5. for *Imposters* r. *Impostors*. P. 400. l. 13. for *hear* r. *here*. P. 411. for *s* r. *as*. P. 481. l. 11. for *ocular* r. *ocular*. P. 492. for *παράδοσεως* r. *παράδοσεως*. P. 494. l. 24. d. *the Case of*.

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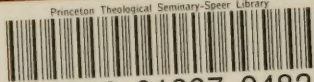
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